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Himmler. Inquisitor in pince-nez

Himmler

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Chapter 1 Was there a "strict father"?

In his fundamental biography of Heinrich Himmler, the German historian Peter Longerich began the story of the life of the future Reichsführer SS with a mention of the story "School Story" written in 1980. Its author Alfred Andresh, once a student at a Munich gymnasium, spoke about how the director of an educational institution humiliated a disobedient young man. The student, who came from a noble family, did not want to obey the authority of the headmaster, and therefore he called him to the blackboard and demonstrated with sadistic pleasure that the boy's self-conceit was unfounded, since he did not have a deep knowledge of academic subjects. Later on the pages of this story it was shown that the director of the school was the "father of the killer", that is, the father of Heinrich Himmler. It can be assumed that the whole story was invented, which in turn was one of the many attempts to comprehend the "Himmler phenomenon". In the Freudian and psychoanalytic manner characteristic of those years, Heinrich Himmler's career was portrayed as the result of a conflict between son and father. Allegedly, the despotism of the parent pushed the son into the camp of the far-right revolutionaries, which was the beginning of the path that led to war crimes.

However, in reality, Gebhard Himmler was a more complex figure, so that he could fit into the trivial formula of the "despotic father" and thereby explain the career of Himmler Jr. If you rely on numerous reviews, then you can get a very definite impression about the father of Heinrich Himmler: an energetic personality that inspires respect, a broad-minded person, a fair Rex

(nickname of Gebhard Himmler at school), who tried to instill in his students a love of history and culture.

Gebhard Himmler was the son of a petty Protestant clerk, which was almost a classic social environment from which many successful and even prominent people came out. Heinrich Himmler's grandfather, Johann Himmler, was born in 1809 to a peasant family from Ansbach. Over time, he preferred to become an artisan and was even known among his acquaintances as an excellent weaver. However, Johann's career was very changeable. Over time, he ended up in the police service, where he rose to the rank of brigadier (police wahlmister). From 1862 until his death in 1872, he was an adviser in the district administration of Lindau. The personal life of Johann Himmler could not be called too successful. He married only at the age of 53, when he moved to permanent residence in Lindau. His wife was 24-year-old Agata Rosina Kinet, the daughter of a watchmaker who was a Catholic. In 1865, the couple had a child, who was named Gebhard. Johann Himmler died when his son was seven years old, and therefore his mother took up his upbringing. It was to her that the boy owed not only the Catholic faith, but the determination and energy with which he tried to make a career, in order to thereby escape from the environment of petty burghers. In 1884, Gebhard Himmler entered the University of Munich, where he studied German studies and classical languages. In 1888, he successfully passed the state exams. After that, Gebhard Himmler spent some time in St. Petersburg, where there was a relatively large German diaspora. In the capital of the Russian Empire, Gebhard Himmler worked as a private tutor in the house of the consul, Baron von Lametzan. It was through Baron von Lametzan, who was friendly with the Bavarian Prince Regent Luitpold, that Gebhard Himmler was able to meet

representatives of the Wittelsbach dynasty. After returning to Bavaria, he gets a job as a teacher at a gymnasium. In 1894, Gebhard Himmler had a unique opportunity -

he was invited to become the tutor of the son of Prince Arnulf von Wittelsbach. The prince was the brother of Prince Regent Luitpold. Gebhard Himmler remained at court until 1897. When he left the upbringing of a young aristocrat, he got a place in Munich's prestigious educational institution, the Wilhelm Gymnasium.

Having acquired a new job, Gebhard Himmler could think about starting a family. In 1897 he married the daughter of a merchant, Anna Maria Haider. The bride was only a year younger than the groom, she was 31 years old. There are many versions regarding the reasons for this marriage. Peter Longerich pointed out that the bride's father died when the girl was only six years old, and therefore it could hardly be considered a marriage of convenience. However, Katrin Himmler, in her book *The Himmler Brothers*, pointed out that the grandmother's dowry was about 300 thousand marks, which at that time was a very decent amount.

Anna and Gebhard Himmler had three sons: Gebhard, Heinrich and Ernst. Heinrich Himmler was the second child, the middle of the brothers. He was born on October 7, 1900. He has been honored since childhood. Prince Heinrich, who at one time was brought up by Himmler Sr., expressed his readiness to take patronage over his namesake. Despite the fact that Heinrich Wittelsbach was hopelessly ninth in the order of succession to the Bavarian throne, Heinrich Himmler nevertheless ended up connected with the Bavarian court, which later had a very positive effect on his career. The connection of the Himmler family with the Bavarian ruling dynasty was also indicated by the fact that the sons received second

names that were iconic for Southern Germany. Gebhard Jr. received the middle name Ludwig, which was given in honor of Ludwig II of Bavaria, and Heinrich - Luitpold, which was given in honor of the Prince Regent.

The Himmler family lived in prosperity, led a measured life, and when raising children, the stake was placed on diligence and religiosity, which at the turn of two centuries was almost a hallmark of all wealthy Munich employees. While Anna ran the household and took care of the well-being of the children, Himmler Sr. tried to realize his teaching skills not only in the gymnasium, but also within the family. He tried to turn his children not just into educated people, but into a kind of erudite, and therefore focused on a thorough study of classical literature, history and the assimilation of ancient languages. Introducing children to religion was the initiative of the mother, who was a staunch Catholic; Himmler senior, on the contrary, warned his wife against excessive activity in this area. Despite all the unfounded statements that appeared in the historical literature of the 70-80s of the twentieth century, Gebhard Himmler's paternal authority was expressed not in despotic severity, but in the patient upbringing of his sons. They did not obey his will, but had to act in strict accordance with the system of rules, which was meticulously developed by their father. However, this severity had nothing to do with harshness, but was saturated with cordiality and kindness. This is evidenced at least by the fact that Himmler Sr. devoted a significant part of his free time to collecting postage stamps. He willingly showed his sons his collection, which instilled in them a love for philately. In addition, he taught shorthand to children. For this reason, almost all of the Himmler family correspondence has been preserved in

in the form of shorthand notes, which often creates problems for modern historians and researchers.

The only thing in which Himmler Sr. showed himself quite strictly was the school performance of his sons. He tried to get them used to the fact that the children used the holidays to repeat the school material. When the eldest of the sons, Gebhard, was ill for half the school year, the father made every effort so that his son not only mastered the missed material, but also became the best student in the class. Also, both parents paid attention to the fact that their offspring were friends with "good" children, which meant young men from wealthy Munich families.

The great-granddaughter of Gebhard Himmler, Katrin, drew the attention of readers to the fact that the pedantry of her ancestor was most clearly manifested in 1910, when he was going on a trip to Greece. It was not expected that during this trip he would be accompanied by one of the family members. Himmler Sr. turned the preparations for the trip into a whole system of events, including the compilation of farewell letters that were written in case he died or perished in Greece. There was a feeling that Gebhard Himmler was going to war, and not on an exciting tour. In each of the letters, the father gave his sons advice on how they should continue to behave in life and in society. Gebhard Jr., he "bequeathed" a real catalog of virtues. The father called on the eldest son to "zeal, fidelity to duty" so that he could become "a skillful, religious, real German man." Unfortunately, the letter addressed to Heinrich has not been preserved. But it can be assumed that the future Reichsfuehrer SS was also called for something positive. The common thing for all the sons of Gebhard Himmler was one thing: the father wanted them to receive

academic education, but was categorically opposed to them graduating from theological or philological faculties or becoming officers.

On the eve of the First World War, the Himmler family lived in a luxurious apartment that occupied almost an entire floor. They had servants at their disposal, and therefore it can be assumed that the family did not know any special financial problems. At this time, the Himmlers maintained numerous connections, and guests often visited their house. Prince Heinrich willingly participated in the fate of his growing namesake. As follows from the correspondence that Himmler Sr. conducted with representatives of the Wittelsbach dynasty, these relations were completely sincere. On Christmas Eve, Prince Heinrich and his mother, who, after the death of her husband, chose to take his name, and therefore became known as Princess Arnulf, invariably came to the Himmlers' house.

The conservative, monarchist and largely Catholic Himmler family, which adhered to traditionalist attitudes, was the exact opposite of the urban environment that turned Munich into one of the centers of modern art and what is now called "tolerance" in the early twentieth century. In 1902, the Himmlers lived for some time in Passau, where Gebhard Himmler received a place in a humanitarian gymnasium. However, in February 1903, his middle son, Heinrich, fell seriously ill. He had severe pneumonia, and therefore the mother and children had to move to Wolfegg for several months, where there was healing air. At that time, there was a suspicion that little Heinrich could be ill with tuberculosis. At the turn of the century, this was one of the reasons for the relatively high (compared to today) infant mortality. When Heinrich was on the mend, the children and their mother returned back to Passau. However, this episode for life laid in the soul of the parents the fear of a possible

death of children. In this regard, Heinrich, who was never distinguished by a strong build and good health, was most feared.

In 1904, the Himmler family again moved to Munich, where Gebhard Himmler was offered a teaching position at the Ludwig Gymnasium. This time, the Himmlers decided to rent an apartment in the immediate vicinity of the university, at No. 86 Amalienstrasse. At this time, the children were constantly sick, and Anna was seriously worried about how her next pregnancy was going. Despite all the fears, in 1905 the third son, Ernst, was born. Heinrich quickly felt on himself that all parental love was immediately given to his younger brother. Heinrich found himself in the difficult position of the middle son, who, on the one hand, was surpassed in success by Gebhard, who went to school, and on the other hand, there was a very small Ernst who took all his parental tenderness.

In 1906, Heinrich was sent to school. Despite the fact that he was supposed to be enrolled in the Amalien school assigned to the quarter of his residence, he ended up in a monastic educational institution, which was located in the very center of Munich on Salvator Platz. His stay at this school was not associated with any happy memories. Like

older brother, Heinrich was very often sick. He spent almost half of the school year at home, where he was taught by a home teacher. He was able to cope with the educational material, but contrary to the expectations of his parents (primarily his father), Heinrich did not become the best student in the class. He studied well, but still not as brilliant as Gebhard Jr. In addition, in the monastery school, Henry was known as an unsociable child. The situation changed somewhat when in 1908 he was transferred to the Amalien school, where he nevertheless managed to get close to classmates and even made friends.

The Himmler family spent most of their summer holidays in the Bavarian Alps, which was good for the boys' health. For them, it was the most exciting time. The Himmlers tried to combine leisure with sightseeing, boating and hiking, etc. When the family went to Lenggries in 1910, Himmler Sr. instructed Heinrich to keep a diary in which he would record the details of his summer vacation. The father himself made the first entry in his diary, thereby setting the tone and helping his son navigate how to make diary notes. Heinrich kept a "summer diary" for several years, which was regularly edited by his father. In this case, one can hardly be surprised that the diaries of different years, which Heinrich Himmler kept as a boy, were very reminiscent of school problem books or school textbooks ("from point A to point B ..."). They were overburdened with pedantic enumeration of the most banal things that Henry did during the holidays. So, for example, in 1911 he lists in order how many times he went swimming. From this diary we can learn that during the holidays he bathed 37 times. It can be said that over time, paternal checks of diaries had their effect - the place of paternal control was taken by self-control.

In the autumn of 1910, Heinrich was again transferred to a new educational institution. This time it turned out to be the privileged Wilhelm Gymnasium, in which Himmler Sr. worked until 1902. At that time, Heinrich was very thin, almost tiny. He was weakened by numerous illnesses. In addition, at the age of 10, he looked somewhat naive and ridiculous, with round glasses and a slightly pronounced chin. One of Heinrich's classmates, Wolfgang Hallgarten, many years later, fleeing the persecution of the National Socialists, emigrated to the United States. There he will be among the leading

American historians of German origin. At first, Hallgarten could not believe the fact that the "monster-Himmler" and his school friend with the same last name were the same person. He could not imagine in the role of the Reichsführer SS "that clumsy boy with a short haircut and gilded glasses that he wore on a sharp nose." At school, Heinrich Himmler was always in good standing with teachers. Some of his classmates considered him a nerd, and therefore Heinrich was never particularly popular among them. During our school years, we cannot find the slightest indication that Heinrich was an anti-Semite. It would be more correct to say that he shared the radical anti-French views that were inherent in a significant part of the German burghers.

In 1913, Himmler Sr. was expected to be promoted. He was transferred from gymnasium teachers to the post of deputy rector of the humanitarian gymnasium, which was located in Landshut. Here the Himmler family was able to settle in a small mansion with a garden. Around the same time, the family of Ferdinand von Pracher, one of the high-ranking Munich officials, moved to Landshut. Heinrich immediately became friends with his stepson, Falk Zipperer. This friendship will last for many years. In 1937, Heinrich Himmler gave his friend who was getting married an elegantly designed dining table. In 1938, Himmler, bypassing all instructions, will accept Zipperer into the SS. In 1940, Falk Zipperer, who was an applicant for a degree in the history of law, will become one of the authors of a collection of articles that was published on the 40th anniversary of Heinrich Himmler. Himmler would present his last gift to Falk Zipperer and his wife Liselotte on Christmas Day 1944.

In the same Landshut, Himmler would have another friend, with whom he would maintain contact until the end of the Second World War. It was about Karl Gebhardt, who was three years older than Heinrich. Later, Karl Gebhardt will become a doctor and head one of the sanatoriums,

located in the vicinity of Berlin. This sanatorium will play its role in the life of Heinrich Himmler, which will be discussed later. In addition, Heinrich Himmler, from the time of his residence in Munich, was friends with the children of the general guardian Hager, Eddie and Louise. As you can see, despite the fact that Heinrich was not liked at school, because he was considered too purposeful (careerist) and a sissy, he was by no means deprived of communication with his peers, he was not alone, as some of the researchers say. Also, one should not consider Heinrich Himmler a hack, completely devoid of any talents. His school success in Landshut could make many students jealous. Heinrich consistently received "excellent" grades in religion, history, language subjects. Worst of all was the case with physics. But even so, he only received a "satisfactory" once in a year. The school reference, which was given to Heinrich Himmler for the 1913-1914 academic year, said: "It is obvious that he is a very capable student who achieved his success, becoming one of the best in the class, thanks to tireless diligence, healthy ambition, the desire for knowledge. May be a model student."

Chapter 2

The collapse of the old world

The comfortable and comfortable world of the Himmler family collapsed when the First World War began. The news of the assassination of the Austrian heir to the throne, Archduke Ferdinand, Himmlers met during a summer holiday in the picturesque town of Tittmoning located on the German-Austrian border. At this time, Heinrich Himmler, in addition to the usual records of his daily routine, makes disturbing political notes that perfectly reflect the atmosphere of a country idyll that is ready to end literally any day. "July 29. Gebhard's birthday. The beginning of the war between Austria and Serbia. Walk on the Wagingersee lake. The proposal to start the war was underlined in red. German researchers found that in the following days, Heinrich erased his notes more than once, and then made them again in red ink. In particular, this concerned the phrase: "Martial law has been declared." In August 1914, household notes give way to political news, which come to the fore in Heinrich Himmler's diary. "August 1. Mobilization in Germany. 2nd Army Corps. Even the landscape. August 2. They played in the garden. After dinner, at about 7:30, the news came that Germany had declared war on Russia. August 3rd. Border battles with Russians and French. Pilots and spies. We are gathering our things as soon as possible." Indeed, the summer holidays were very quickly ended, and the Himmler family tried to quickly return to Landshut.

Further entries in the diary of Heinrich Himmler are mainly focused on the beginning of successful hostilities for Germany: "August 23. The German crown prince wins north of Metz (Longueville). Prince Henry sent a letter to the Pope. He was slightly wounded during an attack on French dragoons. A worthy response from Germany to Japan's ultimatum. Germans in Ghent. They played the piano..."

The Bavarians behaved very bravely in yesterday's battle. The whole city is decorated with flags. The French and Belgians could hardly imagine that we would move forward so rapidly. The 1st Landsturm sends out appeals. Namur besieged. 8,000 Russians were taken prisoner in Gumbinnen. A day later, Heinrich Himmler wrote excitedly in his diary: "The pursuit of the French by the army of the Bavarian crown prince brings rich trophies (prisoners and 150 guns). 21st Army Corps on Luneville. The army of the German crown prince continues to pursue the enemy (Longwy is ahead). Duke Albrecht of Württemberg defeated the French army, which was heading towards Semois. The enemy is driven. Trophies: prisoners, generals, guns, banners. Our units operate west of Massa near Maubeuge. An English cavalry brigade was met and defeated there. Hooray!"

After that, Heinrich went daily to the office of the local newspaper, where he wrote out reports from the fronts in his diary. "August 27th. In the afternoon, a telegram arrived: Crown Prince Luitpold of Bavaria had died of a sore throat. Small cruiser "Magdeburg" in the fog in Finnish

the bay ran aground and could not escape. The cruiser exploded. Losses amounted to 85 people, some of them died, some were injured. Some managed to escape on a German torpedo boat. The timid inhabitants of Landshut bowed their heads. They spread terrible rumors and are afraid that the bloodthirsty Cossacks will deal with them. Today was published the first complete list of losses suffered by the Bavarian army. August 28. The English army is defeated. After that, you can freely move forward. I rejoice in these victories over the English and French as much as our enemies are upset by this. They must be downright angry. Falk and I would like to take part in these events. The German Michel and his faithful ally the Austrian are not afraid of anyone in this world.

In addition to the actual enumeration of Germany's military victories, Himmler's diary devotes a lot of space to critical remarks addressed to local burghers. On the same day that the last entry was made, Himmler notes in his diary: "There is no enthusiasm at all among those remaining in Lower Bavaria. When the mobilization is announced in the old part of the city, everyone begins to whimper and whimper. I would not have thought that this city belongs to Lower Bavaria, since the inhabitants of this area are known for their pugnacious nature. This was said by one of the wounded soldiers. Terrible and ridiculous rumors are spreading around the city, which are invented by the townspeople themselves.

Even at a young age, Heinrich Himmler did not hide his contempt for the townsfolk. In the pages of his diary, he described the inhabitants of Landshut as "stupid people whose hearts sank into their heels when rumors arose about a possible retreat of troops from Paris."

With no less contempt, he described the events that took place on September 30, 1914. On this day, a train with wounded French prisoners stopped at the Landshut station. "The whole station was packed with curious Landshut residents who were terribly rude when they gave water and bread to a seriously wounded Frenchman. Do not forget that these guys are much worse than our wounded, since they are in addition to everything in captivity. Heinrich had a completely different attitude towards the Russian soldiers who were captured: "In East Prussia, not 70 thousand, but 90 thousand Russians were taken prisoner. They breed like parasites."

Despite the fact that the First World War was going on in Europe, in the summer of 1915 the Himmler family decides to recover after all on a country holiday. This time the choice fell on Burghausen.

The arrival of Ha train station in Mühldorf prompted Heinrich to reminisce about a year ago, when the world war had just begun. Although the jingoistic mood both in Germany and in the Himmler family waned, Heinrich wrote in his diary that "the people were cheerful and cheerfully headed to war." At that time, everything that was connected with the war and the army literally fascinated the 15-year-old Heinrich Himmler. When his elder brother Gebhard, together with his parents, went to visit the wounded, Heinrich could not hide his envy, which he wrote about in his diary. However, he soon had the opportunity to face the preparations for hostilities. In 1915, the school class of Heinrich Himmler went to inspect the trenches and battle fortifications that were being built by the forces of the Bavarian Landwehr. The young man was so bewitched by this system of military communications that he even made several sketches on the pages of his diary.

In June 1917, Gebhard Jr. turned 17 years old and volunteered for the local Landsturm, where he was enrolled in the reserve. This was another reason for Henry's envy. He wrote in his diary: "Oh, if it were my will, I would have been there long ago." However, Heinrich Himmler belonged to the so-called generation of youths of war - he was too young to be sent to the front. But at the same time, the generation of these young men was old enough to carefully get acquainted with military and political events, at least in this way acquiring some kind of "military experience". In the case of Heinrich Himmler, these experiences were initially expressed in the form of war games. In the initial stage of the war, when it seemed to everyone in Germany that it would not last long, Heinrich made the following notes: "Falk was played in the garden. Captured a thousand Russians east of the Vistula. The Austrians are advancing." And here is a note made in the last days of August 1914: "They played with Falk, armed with a sword and shield. This time

Germany and Austria opposed forty army Russian, French and Belgian corps. They defeated the Russians in East Prussia - 50 thousand were taken prisoner Human".

From the spring to the autumn of 1915, Heinrich Himmler was a member of the Jugendwehr, a youth paramilitary organization in which pre-conscription training of young men took place.

Many of Heinrich's school friends were listed here. It was within the framework of the Jugendwehr that Heinrich Himmler showed "commendable diligence", which was noted by the leadership of this youth union. In his diary, Heinrich Himmler noted with pride: "Military training. The exercises are hard enough. I lay on the wet ground for almost a quarter of an hour. However, it didn't hurt me at all." However, Himmler pretended to be wishful thinking, it was after training at the Jugendwehr that he began to suffer from stomach pains. He could not get rid of them until his death. But Heinrich Himmler did not want to give reason to suspect him of effeminacy. According to his diary, in September 1914 he began to work hard with dumbbells in order to build up physical strength. In February 1917, Heinrich Himmler even joined the Landshut Gymnastics Union.

Meanwhile, the war was part of the daily life of most Germans. The Himmler family was no exception. There were interruptions in the supply of food and basic necessities. In November 1916, the German imperial government issued a decree establishing a special auxiliary service. All German men aged 17 to 60 who, for various reasons, did not serve in the army, were to be enrolled in it. As a rule, these people were supposed to be used for military work.

destination. At about the same time, news comes to the Himmler family that Prince Heinrich, Heinrich Himmler's patron and godfather, has died in Romania. At that time, the prince was 32 years old. For the Himmlers, it was not just the loss of a family friend. The death of Prince Heinrich actually opened up unhindered access to the Bavarian court, which Himmler Sr. decided to use for the benefit of his sons.

The eldest of the sons, Gebhard, who had already been in the ranks of the Landsturm for two years, was drafted into the 16th Bavarian Infantry Regiment in May 1917, where, after training, he received a junior officer rank. Heinrich's friend, Falk Zipperer, also left the gymnasium and in April 1917 began training for an officer's rank. Heinrich Himmler, who from October 1915 had been doing pre-conscription training in the youth company of Landshut, wanted to follow the same path. In the summer of 1917, Himmler Sr. made considerable efforts to get his son an officer candidate in one of the Bavarian infantry regiments. To do this, he decided to use his friendship with Princess Arnulf, the mother of the deceased Prince Henry. He hoped that Heinrich Himmler could be enrolled in the 1st or 2nd Bavarian infantry regiments, which were considered elite. However, these attempts were unsuccessful, the list of replenishment of these military units was so long that there was no place for Heinrich Himmler in it. During a lengthy correspondence with the military departments, Himmler Sr. tried to find out whether it was possible to combine military service with a career as an engineer. Gebhard Himmler wrote in one of his letters: "My son Heinrich has a desire to choose the service of an infantry officer as his life's work."

Shortly before the start of the school year (autumn 1917), Heinrich Himmler, after a vacation spent in Bad Tölz, suddenly for

left the gymnasium. By that time, he had already completed seven gymnasium classes and had a reputation as a good, even excellent student. Leaving the gymnasium, obviously, was due to the fact that Heinrich Himmler intended to be a registered officer candidate in one of the infantry regiments. However, he did not succeed, because due to his age he was not subject to conscription. In October 1917 he was forced to return to the gymnasium. However, his disappointment was short-lived. On December 23, 1917, Heinrich Himmler received word that the 11th Infantry Regiment was ready to enroll him as an officer candidate. Apparently, it was at this time that Princess Arnulf entered the business. Still, Himmler Sr.'s connections with the Bavarian court did their job. 2

January 1918 Heinrich Himmler left the gymnasium and began training as part of the reserve battalion of the 11th regiment, which was located near Regensburg.

The youth's joy knew no bounds. This is evidenced at least by the fact that he signed his letters addressed to his parents with the Latin phrase "dearer Heinrich", that is, "soldier Heinrich". Defined as a "soldier" Heinrich Himmler immediately tried to demonstrate his masculinity to his colleagues. However, since there were no real reasons for this, Heinrich Himmler had to limit himself to smoking. However, this displayed masculinity was only a pose. It was very difficult for Henry to get used to the military world, about which he wrote to his parents more than once. He complained about the poor food supply, which he managed to compensate to some extent with visits to taverns. In addition, Heinrich was annoyed by the lack of clean linen, which could somehow make his life in the barracks easier. He asked to send some things from home. These requests were granted, although not immediately. During the first five weeks of his stay in the barracks, Heinrich Himmler received seven parcels from home. However, this clearly did not please him. He often began his letters home with exasperated phrases: "My dearest

parents! Nothing came from you today. It's not very good". In the meantime, the week followed the week, and Heinrich Himmler still got used to barracks life. His letters home did not actually contain reproaches, but nevertheless they still indicate that he remained attached to the family and

native home.

Since February 1918, Heinrich Himmler received leave with notorious regularity, which he tried to spend at home with his family. Meanwhile, his brother Gebhard was sent to the Western Front in April 1918, where he became involved in fierce fighting, which was invariably associated with huge losses. At the same time, Heinrich literally lost his temper if he did not receive letters from home for at least a few days: "Dear mother! Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the letters I never received. The fact that you are not writing to me right now is very mean.

When the training course was coming to an end and Heinrich Himmler hoped that he would still be transferred to the front, OH, to his no small disappointment, learned that another training program lay ahead of him. Naturally, the parents anxiously expected that their second son would be sent to the front. For this reason, Heinrich wrote home: "This decision will keep you from shedding unnecessary tears. However, do not rejoice too much, everything can change literally overnight. On June 15, 1918, Heinrich Himmler continued his military training in the town of Freising, located 40 kilometers from Landshut. Such a neighborhood allowed him to spend almost every weekend at home.

In some of his letters, Heinrich described his army everyday life, to which he was already almost accustomed, as indicated by short remarks: "Service for me is very difficult,

but still very interesting. Or another passage: "We went swimming this afternoon. The food is very good." Considering the poor health of Heinrich Himmler, it was not surprising that he devoted much attention in his letters to the problem of food supply. However, it cannot be said that Henry ever went hungry. The most difficult thing for him to cope with was the lack of parental care and love. As if trying to demonstrate his masculinity and adult independence, Heinrich wrote to his parents briefly in a soldier's way. It is possible that he envied his older brother, who at that time was at the front, and his service was associated with a risk to his life.

In August 1918, Heinrich reported home that his next preparatory program had been completed, and he himself was preparing to go to the front. However, this did not happen - the young man was once again sent to training courses. On September 15, he ended up in Bamberg, where he was supposed to undergo two weeks of training in handling a heavy machine gun. Meanwhile, the situation on the Western Front was becoming critical. After another unsuccessful offensive, the Reichswehr

in dire need of new officers. The fact that Heinrich Himmler was not sent to the front can have two explanations. On the one hand, the army authorities considered him insufficiently trained to be sent as an officer to the combat zone. Secondly, it was impossible to exclude the possibility that Heinrich's parents tried in every possible way to delay the process of sending their middle son to the front through the Bavarian court. In any case, in early October 1918, Heinrich Himmler mastered the skills of communicating with a heavy machine gun, after which he was entitled to a week's vacation. Then he was to return to Regensburg, where he was planned to be used to train recruits and recruits. As a result, Heinrich Himmler is very

pessimistic

assessed the current situation: "Political events appear to me in a very gloomy, almost black light." He, like many, believed that revolution was inevitable.

But still, Heinrich Himmler was distinguished from many reservists and rear men by the fact that he certainly wanted to be at the front. In the fall, he sent home an enthusiastic letter saying that he somehow managed to talk to a lieutenant who promised to help with his transfer to the front. However, when a company was formed, which was supposed to depart for the battle zone, political unrest broke out in Germany, and therefore it had to be disbanded. Heinrich Himmler was sent home. It was in Landshut that he met the collapse of the monarchy and the military defeat of Germany. The revolution in Munich began the day before the revolutionary events in Berlin. First, the Bavarian king was deposed. On November 9, Kaiser Wilhelm II fled to the Netherlands, and power in Berlin passed into the hands of the Council of People's Deputies. On November 11, the new German government signed an armistice, at the same time recognizing the defeat of Germany in the First World War.

At the end of November 1918, Heinrich Himmler returned to Regensburg, hoping that he could at least receive the rank of Fahnejunker, which young men born in 1900 could count on. However, in practice, he had to take into account the disarmament of the regiment in which he was trained. In this activity, Heinrich Himmler was assisted by his cousin, Lieutenant Ludwig Zahler. Both young men lived in Regensburg, where they rented a room. Realizing the futility of hopes for a military rank, Heinrich began to think about getting a matriculation certificate.

During the revolutionary events of November 1918, Heinrich Himmler did not sympathize with the ultra-right or nationalists. He openly expressed his support for the Bavarian People's Party, which was founded by the key politicians of the so-called Bavarian Centre. Heinrich even contacted his school friend, Karl Gebhardt, who was an activist in the Bavarian People's Party. The sincerity of Heinrich Himmler's political sympathies is evidenced at least by the fact that he asked his father to take part in the activities of the new political party.

Meanwhile, in early December 1918, Heinrich's older brother, Gebhard, returned home from the front. He was not just an ensign, but a Knight of the Iron Cross. For Heinrich Himmler, who had no chance of a military career, this became the subject of admiration and envy. A few days earlier, he had learned that all the Fahnejunkers born in 1900 were to be urgently demobilized from the army.

December 18, 1918 Heinrich Himmler finally moved to Landshut. Having not even received a junior officer rank, he feels deceived. Until the end of his life, Heinrich Himmler claimed that he simply did not have time to receive an officer appointment.

Chapter 3

After returning to Landshut for Heinrich Himmler, the problem of finishing his gymnasium education came to the fore. Recall that by this time he had completed only seven classes of the gymnasium. He was able to catch up with his classmates and get his matriculation certificate on time only thanks to a specially adopted government decision, according to which special

six-month accelerated courses. Himmler Sr. was the class teacher of one of these courses. However, he did not give his son any concessions, as he led the class entrusted to him with traditional rigor and pedantry. At that time, in the classroom where Heinrich continued his studies, there was his friend Falk Zipperer, who had returned from the war. At this time, both young men are trying to write poetry. However, if nature nevertheless endowed Zipperer with a semblance of poetic talent, then Heinrich Himmler's creations were more like clumsy verses.

Meanwhile, political passions were heating up in Bavaria. Kurt Eisner, the man who organized the revolution in Bavaria, was killed by a young far-right officer. In Munich, the Soviet movement began to gain strength, represented primarily by activists of the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany. After the left-wing activists proclaimed the Soviet Republic in Munich, the legally elected government was forced to hide in Bamberg. Volunteer corps and special units of the Reichswehr began to form in northern Germany, which included front-line soldiers who returned to their homeland and adhered to counter-revolutionary and anti-democratic views.

Heinrich Himmler at this time tried to prove himself within the Bavarian People's Party. At one time he even corresponded with its branch in Regensburg. However, at the end of April 1919, he decided to join the Freikorps (volunteer corps) Landshut. At the same time, he was listed in the reserve company of the Oberland Volunteer Corps. This Freikorps was created with the support of the exiled Bavarian government, but the initial initiative came from Rudolf von

Sebottendorff, chairman of the Thule Society. Despite his desire to visit the front and political activity, Heinrich Himmler did not take part in the bloody events of early May 1919, when the Munich Soviet Republic was liquidated. Nevertheless, he was listed as part of the Oberland Corps for another two months, where he even received an official position. This appointment allowed Heinrich Himmler to hope that he would be able to continue his service in the Reichswehr and eventually receive an officer's rank. Indeed, some of the volunteer corps were poured into the Reichswehr, but the Oberland was not among them, which means that Heinrich Himmler could once again say goodbye to his hopes.

In July 1919, Heinrich, as a participant in the war, received his Abitur, although he never took the actual final exams. For the most part, Heinrich Himmler's academic subjects were "excellent", only in mathematics and physics he received "good". Since the young man did not have the slightest prospect of continuing his army career, he made a decision that was very unexpected for many. He decided to study agriculture at the Technische Hochschule Munich. At first glance, such a decision might seem absurd and extravagant. Heinrich Himmler was a typical humanitarian. In addition, his family was urban, and he encountered rural realities only during his stay outside the city during the holidays. In addition, the Himmlers did not have their own estate, where Heinrich could eventually work as a manager.

This decision was explained by the fact that at that time very many demobilized officers and the growing sons of the German nobles were going to receive an agrarian education, believing it to be a new "bread profession". However, most

of them, they perceived their studies as just a respite, which they had to take advantage of before the start of a new war, or at least before the start of a civil war. Heinrich Himmler most likely chose the agricultural direction in order to find himself in the officer's environment, which, in his opinion, made it possible to get closer to the army. In addition, one should not exclude the possibility that this choice was influenced by Heinrich's parents, who wanted their sons to receive practical professions - Gebhard and Ernst began to study as engineers.

In the summer of 1919, Himmler Sr. was appointed director of the gymnasium, located in Ingolstadt. The family managed to find an estate near this place, in which Henry

Himmler could have completed a year of training - this was a prerequisite for admission to the agricultural faculty. On August 1, 1919, Heinrich Himmler began his practical acquaintance with agriculture. At that time, the estate had to work six days a week for 12 hours. On his only day off, Heinrich had to work at the stables. It was hard physical labor, which was difficult for Heinrich Himmler. Now he signed his messages to his parents "Heinrich agricola", that is, "Heinrich the landowner." Even in this signature, Henry's exorbitant ambitions were felt, since his status was more in line with a laborer, but not a landowner. In The Book of Working Days, which Heinrich Himmler kept on the model of his youthful diary, he listed in detail all the physical difficulties that he had to face: "August 26. In the first half of the day, the fertile soil layer was plowed. Unloaded three and a half wagons of barley. "August 29th. In the afternoon, he loaded sacks of rye onto carts. 105 pieces, each 50 kilograms. Unloaded three wagons of barley. However, at this time, Henry could not lead an independent life. Like time

stay in the barracks, he was constantly sent parcels from home. They contained food, clean linen, etc.

Heinrich Himmler really hoped that physical labor would help improve his health.

However, these hopes turned out to be illusory. After two weeks of work, he fell seriously ill, after which he spent more than a month in a local hospital. Doctors suspected that Heinrich had contracted an intestinal infection. In September he traveled to Munich to see the Himmlers' family doctor, Quenstedt. After the examination, he made the following diagnosis: "Heart problems. During the year, do not study and refrain from hard work. Heinrich used the forced rest to read. While still in the Ingolstadt hospital, he compiled a list of books that he planned to read in September-October 1919. This list contained 28 works. During his illness, Heinrich Himmler read a dozen volumes of Jules Verne, several collections of historical stories. The list also included Goethe's Faust and Thomas Mann's The Royal Wedding. The latter was the only book in contemporary German literature. Where with great interest Heinrich read old legends and sagas. This characterizes the literary taste of the young Heinrich Himmler, who preferred romantic stories. At the end of his illness, Heinrich takes up reading political things. Conspiracy literature and anti-Masonic pamphlets fall into his field of vision. In addition, he reads reports on the activities of the "German Committee for Assistance in the Resettlement of Jews in Palestine", that is, we can say that already in 1919 Himmler was familiar with Zionist literature.

On October 14, 1919, Heinrich once again goes to Munich to see Dr. Quenstedt, who finds that the young man's heart is in order. Now all restrictions on study have been lifted, and Heinrich Gimmer was able to enroll at the Technische Hochschule Munich on October 18, 1919. He became a diligent student. Together with his brother Gebhard, Heinrich rented a furnished room at No. 28 Amalienstrasse, that is, in fact, next to the university. Immediately, Heinrich Himmler subordinated his entire life to a strict routine. He usually dined with Mrs. Lorits, the widow of a famous opera singer, who, apparently, wanted to introduce the brothers to her daughters. Evenings he spent with his friends. It may be very interesting that the young Heinrich Himmler repeatedly visited Privy Councilor Lossow. He was considered a friend of the Himmler family, but Heinrich still noted that the adviser showed him "an enormous courtesy." In addition, Heinrich Himmler could be seen in the company of Professor Rauschmeier, with whose daughter Marie, a barely young man, had friendly relations. But most often Heinrich Himmler came to visit the Hagers. Here, one might assume a romantic infatuation with a school friend, Louise.

In November 1919, Heinrich Himmler joined the Apollo Club, which was patronized by "the powers that be." Officially, fencing was practiced at Appolo, in fact, the club performed the functions of a privileged student corporation. After fencing, most of the students went to a nearby tavern, where they had fun drinking parties. At that time, Heinrich Himmler could still afford to drink eight glasses of wine, as he reported in his diary.

However, during these parties, he remained the most sober, as he often had to deliver comrades to their homes.

In terms of public life, TO very sociable Heinrich Himmler continued to be a Catholic activist. He regularly attended church, took communion, confessed. In his diaries, the phrases often flashed: "God help me." The all-night service, which he and his family attended on Christmas Eve in Ingolstadt, made the deepest impression on the young Heinrich Himmler - but most of all, the young man admired the "luxurious rituals." However, it was not worth believing that Heinrich Himmler was limited only to church events. He, like many students of the Higher Technical School of Munich, was a member of the union of front-line soldiers, in whose activities he took an active part. In some cases, he even tried to organize his leisure time in a soldierly manner. So, for example, he voluntarily became an employee of the 14th consolidated company of the 21st rifle brigade, which was a reserve formation of the Reichswehr. Quite often, Heinrich Himmler had to take part in shooting and some semblance of military exercises. There was nothing surprising in this, if we take into account that after the liquidation of the Munich Soviet Republic, the capital of Bavaria turned into a "counter-revolutionary central" of all-German significance.

The activity of legal and semi-legal paramilitary unions was tacitly supported by the Reichswehr. Heinrich Himmler hoped that new hostilities would begin in the near future. He expected that one of these "actions" would take place on November 9, 1919, on the anniversary of the revolution - but in Munich it was relatively calm. Heinrich would spend all the following months in anticipation of the imminent putsch. At some point, his company was even alerted, but again nothing happened. Heinrich Himmler was flattered to feel like a "soldier". In those days, he wrote in his diary: "Until 10 o'clock

A at lectures, and then I again in the royal tunic. I was still a soldier."

Elsewhere he reports: "Today, again, I wear a uniform all day. It is the most expensive garment for me."

On January 16, 1920, Heinrich Himmler learns of the death sentence that was pronounced on Count Anton Arko auf Wall by her, who on February 21, 1919 shot Kurt Eisner in the street, "guilty of overthrowing the Bavarian monarchy." Since the count was a young lieutenant, the same age as many young front-line soldiers, the verdict caused a strong reaction. Many of the students at the ETH Munich demanded the release of Count Arko. These actions were joined by right-wing political organizations, and then by the most conservative circles of the Reichswehr. In the circles to which the young Heinrich Himmler was close, preparations began for the military action so long-awaited for him. The armed release of the prisoner was planned, which was supposed to develop into an anti-democratic putsch. Himmler gladly joined in this matter. In January 1920, he wrote in his diary: "I put on a uniform. At 8 o'clock a large meeting of all students in one of the largest university auditoriums. Demand to pardon Arco. An amazing patriotic gathering. A delegation was sent to the barracks, consisting of me, Captain Lieutenant ST. and Lieutenant B. In the barracks, the delegation from the front-line students received unanimous support. For the first time in months, Munich smelled of fried food again. It is not known how events would have developed in January 1920 if the pardon of Count Arco had not been announced. His execution was replaced with a prison term. In his diary, Heinrich Himmler wrote, not without regret, that "things went too smoothly." He is clearly not

he was impatient to use his weapon, as evidenced by his phrase: "We'll have to do it some other time."

During the so-called "Kapp putsch", when Berlin was captured by the Ehrhardt brigade, Heinrich Himmler took part in the armed patrols of the Munich streets. Despite the fact that the Bavarian Freikorps did not openly support the Berlin rebels, after the failure of the putsch, Ehrhardt and his brigade were able to hide from persecution precisely on the territory of Bavaria.

In the spring of 1920, the Entente countries forced the Berlin government to disband all reserve formations of the Reichswehr. Heinrich Himmler once again found himself outside the paramilitary structure. However, this state of affairs did not last very long. He almost immediately joined the so-called Bavarian civil self-defense, the creation of which was initiated by the authorities, who intended to circumvent the prohibitions of the victorious countries. In addition, Heinrich Himmler joined the Freiweg (Free Way) shooting society, which was openly paramilitaristic in nature. In addition to the psychological moment, one should not forget about purely mercantile considerations - membership in these organizations gave Heinrich Himmler virtually free Sunday travel by train, which he used to visit his parents. In addition to this, it should be noted that at that time the political views of Heinrich Himmler were very loose and unformed. With the exception of the desire for armed action, he was actually not interested in politics, at least he did not trust his diary of any specific political judgments. If some time ago he showed sympathy for the Bavarian People's Party, then already during the elections to the student committee of the Higher School

OH voted for the ultra-right - the "German nationals". Around the same time, he begins to become disillusioned with Catholicism. The impetus for this could be sermons in which the ideas of Bavarian separatism were clearly read and there were attacks in the direction of Prussianism. Himmler considered himself a German nationalist, and therefore could not come to terms with such tendencies. However, at that time he was not yet a racist and a convinced anti-Semite. At least radical ideas have not yet become part of his worldview. This can be confirmed by the conflict situation in which Heinrich Himmler was involved at the end of 1919. At that time, among the front-line students, the question was actively discussed: was it possible to fight in a duel with Jewish students? Himmler could not say anything unequivocal about the possible equality of German students and Jewish students.

As you know, the German student corporations were very conservative, and it would seem that there should be no reason for contradictions within them on the "Jewish question". However, this discussion took place between Pan-German students who denied Jews their rights for "racial reasons" and Catholic students who did the same but for "cultural-religious reasons." The entry that Heinrich Himmler made after that in his diary is very revealing: "After dinner, we talked about Jewishness and the issue of honor. A very interesting conversation. I thought about it on the way back. I come into conflict with my religion." Clearly, Himmler must have shared the position of the Catholic students, but he had an underlying sympathy for racial anti-Semitism. The reservations he allowed himself in the pages of his diary indicated that Heinrich Himmler was still hesitant to go over to the position of a radical racial

anti-Semitism. In particular, he wrote: "Let everything go as it pleases the Lord. I will always pray to him and be a devotee of the Catholic Church, I will protect them even if I am cast out of it. Three days later, Heinrich Himmler struck up a conversation about the church, duels, and the principles of honor with his cousin, Ludwig Zahler. Henry was torn between his personal convictions and the dogmas of the Catholic Church. In a state of this inner turmoil, he wrote in his diary: "In the evening I prayed earnestly. The Lord will help me in my doubts."

Chapter 4

Determining in the formation of Heinrich Himmler's personal views were his connections, which he maintained while studying in Munich. Among his closest friends were the already mentioned Falk Zipperer and Ludwig Zahler. However, attached to his family, Heinrich considered his elder brother Gebhard his best friend. However, Heinrich Himmler spent most of his time at that time in the company of Ludwig Zahler. The young men liked to have long conversations among themselves. Once Heinrich wrote in his diary: "Ludwig accompanied me home, we studied books together and talked. He is a very good person." Relations with Falk Zipperer were somewhat different. Heinrich admired him, perceiving him as a "brilliant great man" who was his "good friend". It is possible that this

friendship was reinforced by a love of poetry. Both young men tried to write poetry. Once, for charity, they even composed a sentimental street song. They often performed it in the circle of their friends.

In those days, Heinrich Himmler often wrote in his diary about creative evenings in which he and his friends took part. They were fundamentally different from student revels: "Everything was

just wonderful. Liu(dvig) and Käthe danced in rococo era costumes – lovely." Since all these evenings were accompanied by dancing, Heinrich, in order to overcome his clumsiness, tried to take dance lessons. "All the young ladies were pretty, especially Kethe, Morrel, Friedel. After that, Mr. Küfner began pouring schnapps. Liu(dvig)ya clashed foreheads (cheers, old chap). And then we danced. Then they played forfeits with many kisses. At about half past one in the morning, we headed home. Yai Liu(mov) were very pleased with this evening."

If we talk about romantic attachments, then the young Heinrich Himmler showed a personal interest primarily in two girls who were part of his circle of friends. At first, 19-year-old Heinrich tried to court Louise Hager, whom he had known since childhood, and then friendly feelings grew into love. Young people constantly corresponded, and Heinrich was a frequent visitor to the Hager family. When he learned that Louise was a devout Catholic, he was wildly delighted. He wrote in his diary that he somehow learned from a friend that Louise spent her days in prayer. This became for Heinrich "the greatest joy that I have experienced in the last eight days." However, these sympathies never developed into a real relationship.

But still, Heinrich Himmler was truly fascinated by Maya, the daughter of Frau Lorits. Maya was a friend of Ludwig Zahler. Heinrich admitted to himself on the pages of his diary how "he was happy to call this beautiful girl his girlfriend." During the November evenings, which he spent with Mrs. Loritz, he had the opportunity to talk with "Fräulein Maya about religion, etc." "She talked a lot about her life. I believe I found a sister in her face.

A friendly company gathered very often. Together they went to concerts, to theaters, visited museums, skated on a skating rink, and sang songs together. Despite the fact that the country was shaking from economic and political crises, the population was frankly starving, the Munich students were happy in their own way and tried to spend their free time pleasantly and easily. Heinrich Himmler described some of these moments in his diary several times: "The lectures started today. We sat up in the evening until 12 o'clock, holding hands. However, the next day, Himmler was gloomier than a cloud: "In the evening we sat in the back room. I was terribly serious and depressed. I believe that very serious times are coming. Or does it mean something else? However, he prefers to focus on the thought that could bring him out of his depressive mood: "I am glad to fight if I can wear the royal tunic again." Gradually, the oppressive thoughts disappeared: "First, Maya sang "Love Frau". As she performed, tears welled up in her eyes. I guess Ludwig doesn't realize what a lovely girl she is. I can't fully comprehend it either. Later, Gebhard and Käthe played the piano. Ludwig and I were sitting in armchairs, while Mariel and Maya were on the floor, pressed close to us. All clung to each other, partly out of love, partly in brotherly friendship. It was an evening I will never forget."

However, since the relationship between Maya and Ludwig began to deteriorate over time, this was reflected in the "fraternal disposition" of Heinrich Himmler. He prefers to take the side of his secret love. "I stop understanding Ludwig. Poor Maya! Two days later Heinrich would write in his diary: "He [Ludwig] makes me feel sorry. And even more I'm sorry about Maya. Still, man is a miserable creature. Leftover residue. The heart in turmoil seeks rest in God. But we are so powerless that we cannot be helped." Heinrich Himmler experienced a typical lovesickness. He

mired in "heavy thoughts of spiritual warfare" that HE went unnoticed by his friends. He would like to stay with them. In his diary, he thoughtfully wrote that "his duty was to

activities, in the struggle, that we must not allow the loss of control over oneself. An attempt to maintain the notorious control over oneself was demonstrated to friends in mid-November 1919, when it was decided to hold the so-called "hypnotic evening" in the Lorits' house, which was a kind of seance. Heinrich Himmler began to strongly protest against the fact that a "guest hypnotist" would come to his friends' house. However, at that time he still did not change his attitude towards Maya: "Unhappy good Maya! She worries when I see them like this" (the quarrels between Maya and Ludwig were implied).

It was at this time that the first entries appeared in the diary of Heinrich Himmler that he intended to leave Munich and go as a "settler" to the East. "I don't know what I'm working for now. I work because it is my duty, because I find rest in work. I work for the female ideal, which I want to bring from beautiful Germany far to the East, where I, as a German, will fight to the very last. As if wanting to realize his ideas, Heinrich Himmler begins to learn Russian. Himmler's thoughts return again and again to the theme of war. "Gebhard, Liu(dvig) and I talk a lot about how great it would be if we could stay in the army. We would be together on the battlefield.

Probably, then my heart would beat faster. But I do not want to be weak, I cannot give a reason for the manifestation of weaknesses. I'll head to the war, plunge into the fight. Perhaps in a few years I will gladly go to the war of liberation, if by that time I will still be able to move around.

At this time, the entries in Heinrich Himmler's diary are a mess. Thoughts of war, resilience are interspersed with descriptions of how he spent his time with his buddies and Maya. They read books together, chatted, played music, talked about God, sometimes sat holding hands, and invariably kissed goodbye in a friendly way. At this time, another shock awaited Henry. At the end of November 1919, he learns that Maya must leave Munich forever in the coming months. He understands that he cannot influence the situation in any way, and therefore falls into another "heroic depression". "If I am destined to cope with the difficulties that life presents me, it means that I can fight, and this is a good quality. But a man with his inclinations, with his incomprehensible longing, with his fighting heart torn apart is a very pitiful creature. But still, I'm proud to be involved in this fight." Realizing that parting with Maya is inevitable, he tries to psychologically set himself up against this girl: "I don't know if she really is what she seems to me, or if I just invented this image." Heinrich Himmler understands that his chances of becoming a happy lover with Maya are negligible. However, he is not yet ready to completely abandon his love. On December 5, on the Catholic feast of St. Nicholas, he receives an anonymous gift, and immediately prefers to present Maya as the giver. He finds a few golden hairs in the bundle, which finally "convinces" him - a gift from Maya. However, another disappointment awaits him. Three days later, Heinrich Himmler learns that the package came from a certain Fräulein Vanschaffe. This girl did not make the slightest impression on young Heinrich. Himmler at another crossroads: "Today I decided to give up all pretense and be only myself. If I don't find a girl who will love me and suit me in terms of her qualities, then I have no choice but to go to Russia.

It is possible that the feigned gloominess that Heinrich allowed himself to get on the nerves of his friends and brother. This is indicated by Himmler's entry in his diary after the New Year's celebration: "Ludwig tells me that I am too receptive, and he is partly right, of course." These days, Heinrich is literally outraged by the behavior of Maya, who "completely ignores him." In fact, he was deceived about her feelings and wishful thinking. As a result, Heinrich Himmler decided to give up his feelings for the girl: "Thanks to her and Louise, I came to the conclusion: there are no more heartless girls than those who once loved."

However, one should not assume that at that time Heinrich Himmler was obsessed with purely sublime and romantic feelings. His diaries testify to awakening sexual curiosity. He describes a situation when a woman of easy virtue tried to pester him, Gebhard and Ludwig on Odeon Square. After the end of World War II, this

the story has been the subject of much speculation. Although Himmler's entry: "Naturally unsuccessful" - just said that the friends decided to refrain from contact with a dubious person. However, this did not prevent Heinrich from making an addition: "However, something of this kind would be extremely interesting." Back in December 1919, Heinrich Himmler discussed Wedekind's scandalous play *Wetterstein Castle* with fellow students, in which the theme of sexual promiscuity and perversion was clearly traced. Himmler did not take the exclusively sanctimonious position inherent in many Catholics in the dispute: "I must say that this is by no means disgusting, but a thing that should be presented to an adult in its entirety." On some occasions, however, Himmler reacted with less restraint. When a book about the love relationship between a young priest and a 14-year-old boy was published in March 1920, he

just choked with OT contempt and disgust. March 7, 1920. Sunday. Half past ten in the evening. I am in a terrible mood. Actually, like the whole of Munich. The idealization of a homosexual is just a monstrous picture."

At the end of January 1920, Heinrich Himmler fell seriously ill with influenza. He spent several weeks on bed rest. At this time, he paid the utmost attention to how willing his friends were to take care of him. "Käthe always brought me food. Liu(dvig) visited me almost daily, often a couple of times a day.... These are people dear to me, best friends. Ketl is like a sister, and Liu (dvig) is like a brother. Friedl sent me the eggs and sends me lots of greetings all the time. She's a nice guy..."

However, the first period of Heinrich Himmler's stay in Munich had a sobering effect on him. He began to perceive reality more objectively. Therefore, one should not be surprised that at every opportunity he lingered in his parental home:

"There can hardly be anywhere better than at home." Heinrich Himmler confides many of his experiences to his parents: "In the evening I walked with my father. We talked a lot with each other. About Louise, about my Russian problem (with my mother in the first place), about the political and economic future of the country." Heinrich Himmler quite rightly believed: "At home I was a cheerful and carefree boy, but as soon as I left my home, I began to change." It can hardly be assumed that there were at least some signs of a "conflict between fathers and children." In any case, in the period up to April 1921.

Based on the diary entries of Heinrich Himmler, which he made during his first period of stay in Munich, it can be unequivocally said that he had certain

problems related to communication with other people. It's not even about the naivete in the perception of girls. The fact is that the young Heinrich Himmler did not accurately assess the emotional behavior of his acquaintances, and therefore could not adequately respond to their actions. He was by no means an expert on human souls. The German researcher Peter Longerich, based on the work of psychologists Gottfried Sprangler and Peter Zimmermann, suggested that Heinrich Himmler had some deviations associated with the emotional communication system, or that his behavior was affected by the consequences of excessive attachment. People who have acquired such problems at an early age, having matured, make too high emotional demands on other people. As a result, disappointment awaits them, which leads to the demand for big changes. Often, such moments are manifested in baseless outbursts of anger, which are replaced by attempts to regain someone's trust. However, often such people are very skillful at hiding their emotional immaturity.

Already from the letters that Heinrich Himmler wrote from the barracks in 1918, it clearly followed that he needed recognition and patronage. At first it was his parents, then his friends took this place. He sought the location of people, but was always afraid to really get close to them. Fearing to appear in a stupid way, he assumed seriousness, which was often the cause of irritation of his acquaintances. However, Heinrich Himmler had the wit and talent to try to compensate for these weaknesses. Its hallmark, which could be

traced almost from early childhood, there was a desire for self-control. He tried to control himself in order to hide his true feelings, a habit that eventually became second nature to Heinrich Himmler.

In addition, in his youth, OH believed that he could gain inner confidence if he worked hard on his character.

A visual manifestation of the desire to maintain control over himself was Heinrich Himmler's attempts to portray himself as a "soldier", which was also associated with the desire to gain recognition from other people. Heinrich Himmler, belonging in general to the generation of "military youth", belonged to that age group of young people whose growing up took place at the time of the defeat of Germany in the war, the overthrow of the monarchy and the revolution. These events became decisive in their lives, so to speak, determining their fate. The events of 1918 were a socio-political challenge for this part of the youth, the response to which required them to fundamentally change their value system, behavioral complex, etc. They were focused on overcoming the external and internal collapse of the country. Such qualities as firmness, sobriety, objectivity have become important for these young people. Himmler had to make considerable internal efforts to control himself and be able to adapt to the conditions of everyday life. The world of the army attracted them with its orderliness and control, in this world insensitivity and weak attachments were perceived not as a disadvantage, but as a virtue. The desire of Heinrich Himmler to prove himself in at least some kind of paramilitary movement is clearly connected with his failed officer career. If we turn to the conclusions of psychologists, they believe that the causes of violations in the system of personal communications lie in early childhood, namely, in insufficient attention from parents. Avoiding various speculations, it can be assumed that in the Himmler family this was due to the problem of the "middle child", since Heinrich constantly had to, on the one hand, compete with the successes of his older brother, and on the other hand,

reckon with the fact that at some point his younger brother became the favorite of the family.

The emotional instability of Heinrich Himmler, which manifested itself during his studies in the first semester of the agrarian faculty (October 1919 - March 1920), was largely reflected in the list of literature read by him. German researchers found that during this period they read fourteen books. Most of them were stories and novels, some were devoted to love and gender relations. Despite the fact that political and ideological literature by no means prevailed in this list, it should be given special attention. During this period, Heinrich Himmler read two books with anti-Semitic content. Apparently, he was trying to find an answer to the "Jewish question" that he had to face during student discussions. Based on the entries made in the diary, it can be assumed that at the beginning of 1920, Heinrich Himmler still did not dare to take a radical anti-Semitic position. From the reading list, it is necessary to separately mention the book, which in many ways had a decisive influence on the formation of Himmler's future ideas. We are talking about the work of Hans Wegener published in 1906, which was devoted to the sexual education of young people. It was focused on preparing young people for marriage. In fact, it was the first textbook dealing with the issue of gender. Despite the fact that the book was almost revolutionary for its time, it was focused on conservative settings. Its author willingly talked about "noble reverence for a pure woman", about the fact that the relations of the sexes were supposed to be, in principle, friendly, but not erotic in nature. As time will tell, Heinrich Himmler will try to put the ideas from this book into practice, engaging in the practical construction of an ideal German family. And while he

made an entry in his diary: "The book of the highest ideals. High, but still achievable. And already achieved. The best book I have ever read on the subject."

After completing the first two semesters of study in Munich, Heinrich Himmler had to undergo agricultural practice. About the life of Heinrich during the second semester of 1920, in fact, no information has been preserved. He hardly even made any entries in his diary. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that moving to the countryside was for him a long-awaited way out of the Munich relations, which he began to be burdened with. At the request of Frau Loritz, the Röhrl family of Friedolfing (Upper Bavaria) agreed to provide Heinrich Himmler with an internship on their estate. The young man had high hopes for the coming year. In one of the letters to his father, Heinrich wrote that he had to improve his health through quality food, and besides that, he planned to harden during agricultural work: "Nerves and soul can rest in nature." In order to at least occasionally break out of rural seclusion, Heinrich Himmler decided to buy a motorcycle. He arrived in Friedolfing on September 7, 1920 and decided to immerse himself in a new field of activity for himself.

It was a sin for Heinrich Himmler to complain about bad food and bad treatment. Moreover, he immediately became friends with Alois Röhrl, a landowner who was ten years older than Heinrich. This friendship will last for decades. They went hunting together, visited agricultural exhibitions together. It was on the initiative of his patron that Heinrich began to take walks in the mountains, and then became a member of the Trungs Club and the organization of German climbers. Besides

Heinrich Himmler did not deny himself the pleasure of taking part in traditional rural holidays. Also in this estate, Henry joined the local branch of "civil self-defense". He regularly attended church and willingly walked with new acquaintances in the neighborhood. However, even in the new conditions of life, Heinrich Himmler remains very attached to his parents. They regularly send him traditional parcels, and in return he sent detailed reports on the spending of pocket money, which were provided to him by his father. Congratulating Himmler Sr. on his 56th birthday, his son wrote in a letter that he "promises to be always purposeful, to be and remain a diligent person."

At this time, Heinrich Himmler preferred to read Ibsen's dramas, which seemed to him "so realistic, and therefore extremely true." In *The Comedy of Love*, Heinrich saw, first of all, the denunciation of the lies on which society was built. However, the young man could not but be impressed that in the works of Ibsen, many people, due to their character, still prevailed over problems and hardships. For Heinrich, this was another confirmation of the need for self-control and tempering one's will. In the drama *"Fire"*, which told about a priest who killed himself and his parishioners, he saw "a book about the will, about morality and about life without compromise." In addition, Himmler enjoyed reading literary adaptations of North German heroic tales. Werner von Heidenstam's novel about the Swedish king Charles XII struck him as "the story of an iron man who inspired his people with his spirit and will until the very last day." In his diary, Heinrich wrote: "In our time, we are in dire need of people like him." Here, in the countryside, he gets acquainted with the Gothic novel by Felix Dans *"Fight against Rome"*, in which the image of "true Germans" was presented. It is possible that this work

strengthened in Heinrich Himmler an interest in ancient and early German history. We must immediately make a reservation that it was at this rural time that Henry read literary works, which later, as it were, turned out to be embodied in his political attitudes. This, for example, happened with the novel *Light from the East* by Rudolf Shtannz, which told about the misadventures of a young German nobleman in Estonia during the First World War. For Himmler, this literary work was another confirmation of the existence of the "terrible East." After reading it, Himmler began to talk on the pages of his diary about the "migration of peoples", about the "strength of the Baltic Germans" and about "our own weakness." In the case of Ernst Zahn's novel *The Women of Tannö*, about a village whose inhabitants decided not to have children again in order to stop the hemophilia passed from generation to generation, Himmler came up with thoughts that were echoes of his future eugenics programs. He will write in his diary: "The fight against the power of blood. Like this fight

lead." In addition, Heinrich read several historical books that were devoted to the participation of the Germans in the war of liberation against Napoleon.

The agricultural practice of Heinrich Himmler in Friedldorfing ended in August 1921. After that, he, noticeably healthier and stronger, returned to Ingolstadt, where he was supposed to undergo a two-month internship at a machine-building plant. Heinrich planned to continue his studies at the ETH Munich from the winter semester 1921-1922. Resuming his studies in November 1921, Heinrich once again decided to settle as close as possible to the educational institution. This time he rented a room at No. 9 Binnerstrasse. From here he could easily get to the university, where he attended additional courses, and also to the state library.

If earlier Heinrich Himmler almost constantly dined at a party, TO now he has to eat at home. Visits to the house of Frau Lorits, which were once a significant event for Heinrich, are becoming rare - he is clearly burdened by this acquaintance. There is an explanation for this. The fact is that his friend Ludwig Zahler had by that time been engaged to Käthe Loritz. Himmler is not ready to accept the girl as the bride of his closest friend, although he tried to look jubilant about this event. In addition, dependence on parents still affects. By and large, Heinrich Himmler took no steps to get rid of her. He willingly carries out his father's small assignments in Munich and just as happily accepts parcels from home. Correspondence with parents becomes even more intense. In his letters, Heinrich describes all the smallest incidents in his life. He gives details about his social life. Heinrich sings in the church choir, makes visits to his father's acquaintances, puts forward his candidacy for election to the student council.

Heinrich Himmler spends most of his free time at Apollo and in student corporations. Almost every afternoon he trains in the fencing gym. However, the art of handling a rapier and a sword is given to him very easily. This cannot but upset him, since according to the strict rules of student corporations, he could become their full member only after he had his first duel. But Heinrich trains relentlessly, waging endless debates about matters of honor and discipline. He visits student buddies injured in duels, which gives him an excuse to meet corporate patrons. However, despite all these efforts, Heinrich does not find the long-awaited recognition. Even in 1921, he is refused to be made a full member of the student corporation. The same thing happens during the attempt made a year later. After

Heinrich Himmler writes about this "failure" in his diary: "On the one hand, I am very bitter that I was not elected. But on the other hand, it's even good, since I will have more free time." But as in many other cases, Himmler did not abandon his idea. He again tries to enlist the support of fellow students and other students. However, they are not too willing to make contact, as they find Heinrich too intrusive. However, public life for Himmler was not limited to student corporations. He was an activist in several other organizations, attended concerts, dance evenings. Nevertheless, even in these actions, the desire to gain popularity among acquaintances was visible.

Heinrich Himmler's relationship with the opposite sex in those days could not be called successful. While brother Gebhard had a permanent girlfriend, and his best friend Ludwig had a bride, Henry himself continued to be in splendid isolation on the personal front. This is not to say that he was not interested in girls. During his second stay in Munich, he makes many entries in his diaries that are devoted to girls in general and certain aspects of communication with the opposite sex in particular. He admires even women completely unfamiliar to him, for example, a pianist whom he sees at one of the concerts. Heinrich constantly meets girls during various events, but in fact does not develop his relationship with them. During the carnival in Munich, he met "a sweet girl, 19 years old, who has a childish disposition and charm, but is still a mature woman with fire and temperament, although frivolous, but still not as bad as she said to herself".

If earlier Ludwig Zahler spoke with Heinrich about his love adventures and experiences, then in the spring of 1922 he

the place was taken by the landlady's son, Alfons Wolf. He was in the eyes of Heinrich Himmler a uniform womanizer. In some cases, he even gave Henry the love letters of his girlfriends to read. As if justifying himself to himself, Himmler wrote in his diary: "I am very interested in these things from a psychological point of view. I want to get to know this area better." One of Alphonse's girlfriends was a cabaret dancer nicknamed Fifi. One evening, Heinrich Himmler even visited her exit. He later stated that "Fifi is an extremely decent girl ... Dancing is one of her talents, in which she wants to find herself. She has refined taste. She kept the conversation going well. We talked about dancing, her costumes." However, as in the past, Himmler's admiration quickly turned to indignation. Heinrich was clearly busy looking for the perfect girl, refined and sublime, Käthe Loritz could have suited this role, but she was already engaged to Ludwig Zahler. It would seem that Heinrich drove herself into some far-fetched framework. In June 1922 he met his acquaintance from Ingolstadt in Munich. "She is interested in agriculture. A straightforward, often laid-back and really fresh young lady ... But I can't get attached to her. My internal duty obliges me to do this."

As if wanting to suppress his sexual instincts, Himmler dreamed of how he would go as an officer to the war or as a migrant to distant lands. He turned love into courageous, heroic images in which he appeared as a lone hero, a fighter who knows no weaknesses. In 1922, this theme runs like a red thread through almost all diary entries: "I am in a very strange mood. Looking forward to the future requires love. You can hide from it only abroad, in the war."

Not having won success in love affairs, Heinrich Himmler nevertheless did not intend to abandon the career of an officer. In 1922, he tries to establish relations with representatives of the Reichswehr. This is facilitated by the fact that in 1921 Henry was nevertheless awarded the rank of ensign, in connection with which he received the appropriate document. Almost a year of rotation in the paramilitary environment and paramilitarist organizations led to the fact that Heinrich Himmler was able to get closer to the forces that were oriented towards armed struggle and the overthrow of the democratic government. At one of the events of the shooting society "Freiweg" a fateful acquaintance took place. It happened in January 1922. In those days, Heinrich Himmler wrote in his diary: "An evening of the rifle union in the Arzberg cellar. The platoon has been reassembled. Captain Röhm and Major Angerer were also present. Very kind."

Over time, for Heinrich Himmler, personal troubles and disappointments gave way to justified anxiety. He was worried about passing exams and getting a diploma. This thought literally haunted him. These anxieties were shared by his parents, who knew that Henry devoted most of his time not to study, but to completely different pursuits. In some cases, Himmler believed that his father was worrying for nothing ("the ambition of an elderly man"), but in some situations he downright panicked. He once wrote in his diary: "When I think about exams and study, I am overcome with fear. Everything is very interesting, but there is a catastrophic lack of time." A few weeks later, Heinrich falls into a melancholy state: "Thinking about how quickly time flies. My beautiful student youth has passed by - it remains only to regret it. However, Heinrich Himmler's fears were largely unfounded. He managed to find understanding among teachers and associate professors. In

This was greatly facilitated by the fact that Heinrich was a representative of the student council. Social activity sometimes bore fruit. "Dr. Nicholas is terribly helpful. I was able to tell him that I had not been to the lectures. At the exam, I asked him to ask me about the practical part."

As a rule, in order to pass the final exams at the Technische Hochschule Munich, it was required to study at least six semesters. Nevertheless, Heinrich Himmler was able to take advantage of the benefits that were provided to the participants in the war. In addition, he was able

to assure the teaching staff that they had an agricultural practice for two semesters. As a result, Heinrich Himmler's studies at the Higher School were reduced to four semesters. In his application submitted to the dean's office, he also indicated that in the period from April to July 1919 he was in volunteer corps, as a result of which he acquired heart disease. Heinrich was met halfway, but during the interview, one of the professors said that his early graduation from a higher educational institution was completely "illegal".

March 23, 1922 Heinrich Himmler passed the last part of the preliminary final exams. He overcame half of the difficult process. After the end of the semester, he decided to visit his new friends in Fridolfing in order to "refuel in the village with new forces." At the end of May, he returned to Munich again, where he planned to complete the last academic semester. Here a surprise awaited him. It turned out that in the spring of 1922 his father was appointed headmaster of the very prestigious Wittelsbach Gymnasium. For Henry, this meant that he was again under his father's control. The unexpected appearance of Himmler Sr. in Munich was

associated with many problems. Heinrich wrote in his diary: "Suddenly, my father arrived in a bad mood and in great agitation. He began to harass me with his reproaches. My good mood was ruined." However, this was only a single conflict. In fact, the relationship between father and son was friendly, almost trusting. They constantly talked during dinner, in some cases even attended political events. Both were nationalists with the same views on life, and therefore Heinrich was able to entrust his father with a little secret - he was associated with semi-legal paramilitary organizations.

Chapter 6 Standard-bearer of the putschists

In 1922, Heinrich Himmler's diary contains more and more entries on the "Jewish Question". From a research point of view, it is very interesting in what context these notes were made. They allow us to draw some conclusions about the worldview that Heinrich Himmler adhered to in those days. In February, he spoke with Ludwig Zahler about "the Jewish question, capitalism, Stinnes and the power of money." In March, he spoke to one of his classmates about "land reform, degeneration, homosexuality and the Jewish question."

The diaries of this period mention that Heinrich Himmler got acquainted with Houston Stewart Chamberlain's book *Race and Nation*. The phrase that Heinrich liked this book because it was "not written with blatant anti-Semitic hatred" indicates that he was generally familiar with the vulgar anti-Semitism common in post-war Germany, which amounted to insulting Jews and calls for physical violence. with them. Yet again,

one can conclude that in 1922 Himmler was not a radical anti-Semite, preferring an "objective" criticism of the Jews. However, it was from his acquaintance with the work of Chamberlain that he began to move to the positions of racial doctrine. Such a transformation led to the fact that over time, negative references to Jews began to be found in Himmler's diaries almost constantly. In particular, he mentioned one of his classmates, "an annoying guy with pronounced Jewish features," or some cafes in which "there was an exclusively Jewish public." Former school friend Wolfgang Hallgarten, who in the 1920s became one of the organizers of the democratic student movement, Himmler already refers to nothing more than a "Jewish errand boy" or "Jewish scoundrel." However, at the same time, on the pages of the diary there are phrases dedicated to individual Jews, to whom Himmler did not show any biased or negative attitude. So, for example, on January 12, 1922, Henry, at the request of his father, visited one of the lawyers: "Extremely nice and kind. It turns out that even a Jew can be a very decent person." However, by the summer of 1922, the characteristics given to Jews first become dismissive, and then completely negative. At the same time, Himmler began to position himself not just as a German, but as an "Aryan".

The summer of 1922 was an important milestone in the formation of the anti-Semitic Himmler. It is possible that this was largely due to the politicization of public life in Germany. Heinrich, who never concealed his sympathies for the right camp, could no longer remain aloof. However, it was in the summer of 1922 that he began to sympathize not only with right-wing ideology, but began to support right-wing radicals. The reason for this was the assassination of Walther Rathenau. This Minister of Foreign Affairs was for the rightists the very embodiment of the hated

Weimar Republic. If we do not take into account his political position, then he was a constant target for anti-Semitic attacks, since he was a Jew by origin. The murder of Rathenau did not leave anyone indifferent in Germany. The country actually split into those who supported the terrorists and those who condemned them. The assassination had major political repercussions. For example, on July 21, 1922, the Reichstag adopted the Law "On the Defense of the Republic", which formally was supposed to facilitate the prevention of political crimes, but in practice allowed Berlin to interfere in the affairs of the lands, in particular Bavaria, which had special rights. The Bavarian government refused to recognize this Law and on July 24 issued its own Decree "On the protection of the constitution of the republic." The competition between Berlin and Munich led to a severe state-administrative crisis. The ultra-nationalist organizations, primarily the National Socialists, decided to use the crisis for their own purposes. The crisis has become an occasion for increased propaganda. The Bavarian Prime Minister Lerchenfeld, who agreed to make concessions to Berlin, effectively split the right camp. Only moderate conservatives from the Bavarian People's Party agreed to support him. The opposition included both ultra-conservatives and radical nationalists. For this reason, the versions of many German historians are erroneous, who say that the radicalism of Heinrich Himmler was a kind of "revolutionary protest" against the conservative views of his father. At that time, most of the classical conservatives (like Himmler's father) were in solidarity with the demands of the radicals. The version of the "conflict between fathers and children" seems completely untenable, if we take into account that it was in 1922 that Henry attended many political events with his father. So, for example, on June 14, 1922, they were at a meeting of the "German Forced Union

against black shame", which took place in the circus "Crown". An organization with such a strange name acted with denunciation of the policy of the victorious countries. In a specific case, the reason for the protest was the use of native troops in the territory of the occupied Rhineland. The meeting ended with an unsanctioned demonstration. To disperse the angry crowd, the Munich authorities had to resort to the help of the police. After that, Heinrich Himmler wrote in his diary: "There were a lot of people. Everyone shouted: "Revenge!" Very impressive. But still, I took part in more impressive events of a similar nature.

The next day, Heinrich and his father dined at a tavern. They started talking about politics again. Heinrich listed the topics of their conversation in his diary: "Owners, honest people of the old way, memories of the past, war, revolution, Jewry, persecution of officers, Soviet times, deliverance, modernity, meat prices, steady immersion in poverty, the desire to return the monarchy, poverty, unemployment, struggle, occupation, war". Himmler's father, like his old acquaintance Castel, was of the view that the country was on the verge of great change. Heinrich was a witness to these conversations: "Father spoke with Dr. Castel, who holds similar views. A small pebble can trigger an avalanche. Perhaps we are only a few days away from great events.

When Rathenau was assassinated a few days later, the situation escalated even more. Heinrich Himmler fully supported this terrorist act: "Rathenau has been shot. I'm glad. Uncle Ernst too. He [Rathenau. — A.V. | was a swindler, but a very capable person, otherwise it would not make sense to kill him. I am convinced that he was talented, but here

acted in no way in the interests of Germany. However, among the acquaintances of the Himmler family, not everyone was of this opinion: "Fanfares. Most condemn the murder. Rathenau,

Turns out he's a martyr! The people have been misled."

On June 28, 1922, Heinrich Himmler took part in a demonstration that took place on the Royal Square under the slogan "Against the lies about Germany's guilt." This event was aimed at the "dictatorship of the Western powers" who tried to make Germany guilty of starting a world war. The rally participants opposed the predatory Treaty of Versailles. Heinrich was much disappointed that the Apollo members did not dare to support this action. Himmler described what was happening in his diary as follows: "Not everything is going well in our union. And so only me and T.G. went. There is nowhere for an apple to fall on the Royal Square. 60 thousand people. A worthy, wonderful event without excesses and thoughtless tricks... A boy in uniform raised a black-white-red banner. It's a good thing the captain of the security police didn't see it, because it could have gotten you three months in jail. We sang "Watch on the Rhine", "Musketeers", etc. It was great. Go home and drink tea. Sometimes in the diary of Heinrich Himmler came across phrases that could be called political secrets. So, for example, five days after the murder of Rathenau, he wrote: "I know the murderers of Rathenau. Organization K. Terrible if someone else finds out about this." The Consul organization, which arose on the basis of the Erhardt brigade, carried out its activities throughout Germany from Munich, where it was tacitly supported by the Bavarian government. Its members were constantly in those circles in which Heinrich Himmler moved in 1922. In particular, we can talk about the Freiweg shooting company. Ernst Röhm and many other officers prone to political violence and armed actions often appeared there. More

while staying with his parents in Ingolstadt, Heinrich Himmler learned about the supply of semi-legal Bavarian formations with weapons. Although it is now very difficult to establish whether Himmler really knew about the preparations for the assassination attempt on Rathenau, or whether he simply retold the rumors that circulated in Freiweg on the pages of his diary.

If we talk about the relationship between Heinrich Himmler and his father in terms of political affairs, then we must dwell on one plot. In the first days of July 1922, Heinrich, on the advice of Himmler Sr., went to the sanatorium to Dr. Kastel. "I had to collect signatures for the Black-White-Red Imperial Union in order to organize a plebiscite that was supposed to legalize the use of black-white-red colors. Needless to say, I got the consent. As you can see, Himmler Sr. not only shared the views of his son, but tried in every possible way to help him. Heinrich Himmler himself took up this activity with incredible activity. He went around not only his acquaintances, classmates, but also members of the Freiweg shooting society, where he collected a lot of signatures. On the same evening, attention was paid to him, which Heinrich told his diary: "I talked about all sorts of things with Oberleutnant Harrach and Obermayer. I've been asked to be used for special purposes." Heinrich Himmler had a presentiment that the attack on the Republic was approaching, and he wanted to play an important role in these events.

Himmler's transition to radical positions was largely due to the fact that it was in 1922 that he found out that all his plans for the future were nothing more than castles in the air. He could not count on a career as an officer, and therefore decided to try himself at the State Science Faculty of the University of Munich, where he applied in May 1922. By this, he seemed to prolong his student life.

Himmler Sr. was ready to support this decision only on one condition - Heinrich had to deal exclusively with science. The father was flattered if his son could get a degree. However, it turned out that at the faculty Heinrich was used not for research, but for poorly paid clerical work. The revelation came very quickly. In the autumn of 1922, rapid inflation began in Germany, and parents could not provide education for three sons at once. After that, Heinrich lost the sense of carelessness that largely characterized his entire past life. He could no longer rely on his parents.

It is worth noting that in the fall of 1922, Germany was not yet at the very bottom of the crisis - it was still waiting for the hyperinflation of 1923. Having a degree in agronomy, Heinrich Himmler had to look for work on his own. It should be noted that he coped with this task without any problems. He was able to find a job at the Shtikhoff-Land mineral fertilizer factory, which was located on the outskirts of Munich. On it, he worked for an equal year - from September 1922 to September 1923. At this time, he does not keep diaries, which is a very unfortunate circumstance for historians, since it was in the autumn of 1923 that the National Socialist uprising, better known as the "beer putsch", took place in Munich. It is known that Himmler took part in it, but many details could not be established.

In the summer of 1923, the Weimar Republic was shaken by one of the worst crises in German history. French troops, under the pretext of non-payment of reparations, occupied the Ruhr. The country was rocked by strikes. Money depreciated literally every day. In Thuringia and Saxony, the socialists were in power, which was the reason for the formation of armed communist organizations in these lands. Under these conditions, a consolidation took place in Bavaria
nationalist

organizations. In September 1923, the "German Combat League" was formed in Munich, which included the assault detachments of the National Socialist Party (SA), the volunteer corps "Oberland" and the organization "Imperial Flag" headed by Ernst Röhm, of which Heinrich Himmler was a member at that time. . Ernst Rehm, who interacted with the Reichswehr, managed to put Adolf Hitler at the head of the new association. However, at that time, the real leader was General Ludendorff, known throughout Germany as a hero of the world war.

In Bavaria itself, the government reacted to the crisis by appointing the former state prime minister, Gustav Ritter von Carr, to the post of "general commissioner", who was effectively given dictatorial powers. In this situation, von Karr relied precisely on the Imperial Flag alliance. For this reason, Ernst Röhm decided to create a new organization, which he called the "Imperial Battle Flag". Among its first members was Heinrich Himmler. He received membership card number 9. At this time, the Bavarian Reichswehr actually left the subordination of Berlin. There has been another conflict between the German capital and Munich. In the meantime, the leadership of the "German Fighting League" planned to put Hitler and Ludendorff at the head of the Bavarian dictatorship, after which the armed formations (on the model of Mussolini's march on Rome) were to begin the "march on Berlin." Along the way, they were to overthrow the socialist governments in Thuringia and Saxony, and then seize power in Germany. However, time did not work for the plans of the "German Fighting Union". By autumn, Bavaria, represented by a triumvirate of von Karr, von Lossow and von Seisser, was ready to start negotiations with the Berlin government. An armed uprising against the republic was planned when these three conservative figures would speak at a meeting in a pub

"Bürgerbräukeller". It was the only opportunity. Further events are well enough described in the research literature, and therefore we will not go into unnecessary details. On November 8, 1923, Hitler, accompanied by stormtroopers, captured the beer hall and the triumvirate located there, thus proclaiming the beginning of the "national revolution". Having supported Hitler's actions in words, the next morning the triumvirate fled the Bürgerbräukeller. After that, the Reichswehr and the police were ordered to launch an operation against the putschists. Hitler and his stormtroopers decided to capture the city center in order to unblock the command building of the military district, where Ernst Röhm and his supporters from the "Imperial Battle Flag" were surrounded. As expected, among the "besieged" on Ludwigstrasse was Heinrich Himmler.

On the morning of November 9, 1923, a strange picture appeared to the inhabitants of Munich: an imperial flag was hung out at the command building of the military district (formerly the military ministry). The building was encircled by parts of the Reichswehr, but the approaches to it were blocked by a wire fence, which was held by the activists of Ernst Röhm. Next to the armed volunteers stood a young ensign in round glasses, who was entrusted with holding the symbol of the paramilitary organization - the imperial battle flag. This was Heinrich Himmler.

Meanwhile, skirmishes began to take place in the city. The column led by Hitler was shot. The capture of the military command building also took place without bloodshed: a shootout ensued, and two members of Ryoma's organization died. However, the matter did not come to executions and arrests. The command of the Bavarian Reichswehr and the leadership of the "Imperial Battle Flag" were able to agree on the peaceful surrender of the building. Ernst Röhm and his supporters left him without a fight, but in exchange they wanted to leave the scene of the collision without hindrance. This also applied to the standard-bearer Heinrich Himmler. It was after the failure of the "beer coup"

the coalition between conservatives and radical nationalists broke up, who until recently planned to destroy the Weimar Republic by joint efforts. It lasted another ten years, until another alliance was formed between right-wing conservatives and radical nationalists.

Chapter 7

After the "beer putsch" that ended in failure, Heinrich Himmler's life prospects turned out to be more vague than ever. Five years after the end of the First World War, he still did not become an officer. He was an unemployed agronomist who had hopes for a political upheaval. The coup ended in failure, without actually starting. Nevertheless, Heinrich Himmler decided to link his fate with the banned National Socialist Party. From his diaries it follows that he continued to perform certain secret tasks. In addition, in February 1924, he visited Ernst Röhm in Stadelheim prison. "We chatted quite casually and cheerfully ... I brought him the Great German Newspaper and oranges, which made him very happy. He still has the same great sense of humor, he remains the same glorious Captain Ryom." Around the same time, Heinrich Himmler moved from his parents to Lower Bavaria, which he had known well since childhood. Now he tries himself as a National Socialist agitator. At the same time, he is making attempts to realize himself as a journalist. For the Langkweider Zeitung newspaper, he writes a long political article, which he called the Munich Letter. Initially, he planned that the "Munich Letter" would become a regular newspaper column, which was intended for those hiding in Lower Bavaria.

national

socialists. Himmler had to not only morally support them, but also to mend the lost ties.

It cannot be said that Himmler was completely devoid of journalistic talent. In any case, his "Munich Letter" was reprinted on February 24, 1924 by the "Rottenburg Bulletin". The editors described the article as "a pamphlet sent from nationally oriented circles." Indeed, the article was specially written in an accentuated Bavarian dialect on behalf of a non-existent member of the Landtag. In this case, Himmler took a very successful pseudonym - Heinz Deutsch. In his material, Himmler-Deutsch denounced the self-satisfied Bavarian man in the street, who cared only about his well-being. For all that, the Munich Letter ended with a very militant appeal: "In Germany, where it is now considered permissible to speculate on slogans and principles, one day the day will come when the empire built on money will fall apart. And the country will have to be restored with blood and iron, as Bismarck did. And this will be our day."

In addition, Himmler tried himself as an orator. On the day when his article was reprinted in the Rottenburg Gazette, he was engaged in agitation in the Lower Bavarian town of Kelheim. He called on the inhabitants of the city to cast their votes for the National Socialist Liberation Movement. A diary entry has been preserved: "A large hall was chosen for the meeting. It turned out to be completely filled. The event was hosted by Dr. Rutz. He made a pause. Then I spoke. I spoke about the oppression of the working people by stock exchange capital, about the fact that we ourselves had to set prices for products, determine the level of wages ... The meeting was our great success. In the evening of the same day, Himmler was to speak in the next hall: "There were a lot of peasants and

communists. Dr. Rutz spoke first, then I. He spoke exclusively about the problems of the working people ... Our statements actually bordered on national Bolshevism. However, the emphasis was on the Jewish question." The next day, Himmler again spoke to the peasants. This time there were no incidents. During Himmler's speech, the "Jewish liquor dealer" began to loudly resent. "I think it's more likely that the peasants then pushed him against the wall." At this time, Himmler poses as a selfless party spokesman: "We stayed indoors with people until 3 o'clock. This service to the people, who have been deceived and misled, is very bitter and difficult. Often people are distrustful. They are afraid of war and death to the core."

While Himmler was practicing his verbal battles, the trial of the putschists began in Munich. It launched on February 26, 1924. Much earlier, Heinrich Himmler had already been interrogated by prosecutors. They tried to establish what role the young man played in the capture of the command building of the military district. However, the collected information was clearly not enough to bring charges against Himmler, and then bring him to criminal or administrative liability. During the trial of Hitler and his associates, the defense side repeatedly resorted to Himmler's testimony as a witness, but he himself categorically refused to come to the courthouse.

Meanwhile, Heinrich Himmler again begins to think about possible emigration. Even while studying at the ETH Munich, he became friends with a fellow student, a native of Turkey. Heinrich first expressed the idea of moving to Turkey in 1921. After that, he constantly corresponded with his friend. The same returned to his homeland and offered his help to Himmler in order for him to take his place

manager of an estate in Western Anatolia. It is not excluded that Heinrich Himmler took this proposal seriously, since there is evidence that he collected the certificates necessary for emigration. However, he did not dare to take such a bold step. If we talk about the "emigration dreams" of Heinrich Himmler, he considered the possibility of moving to the Caucasus, Italy, Persia and Ukraine. But in the end, he came to the conclusion that, as a manager of the estate, it would be better for him to stay in Germany. Nevertheless, his "agrarian prospects" were not very great. In November 1924, he tries to apply for a seat in the "Imperial Union of Academically Educated Agronomists". However, he was offered completely insignificant positions, to which he could not agree in any way.

Heinrich Himmler was not ready to accept that all his projects failed. Such insistence has led to the fact that he becomes irritable, arrogant and intractable. He had shown these sides of his character before, but now they were becoming too noticeable. Heinrich Himmler gave vent to his negative feelings during the engagement of his brother Gebhard. Frustrated by the failed coup, Himmler was ready to pour out his anger and aggressiveness on anyone. However, this story began long before the events of November 1923. In the autumn of 1921, Gebhard began dating Paula Stölzl, the daughter of a banker. Heinrich was against this connection from the very beginning. This was at least indicated by his gift, which he chose for the engagement. It was Agnes Günther's novel *The Saint and Her Fool*. The efforts of Heinrich Himmler were not in vain. In 1923, relations between lovers began to deteriorate. Gebhard reproached Paula for being too free with other men. At the request of his brother, Henry is to become a mediator to promote reconciliation. However, Heinrich completely misunderstood the role assigned to him. He wrote a letter

Paula, in which he reported that "a man must be confident in his bride, even if they have not seen each other and have not met for several years, which will not be easy in the conditions of the approaching war, when one cannot be unfaithful either in thoughts, or in views, or in involuntary touches." Further, Heinrich Himmler denounced Paula, since she "in the most shameful way" was not going to keep this loyalty. He stated that "the brother was too good for her, but he, unfortunately, was too inexperienced in personal matters." Paula decided not to ignore this letter. In a reply message, she recommended that Heinrich stay away from her personal life.

However, Heinrich Himmler could not leave the girl alone. A few months later, Paula heard that he was trying to persuade his parents to break off the engagement. Gebhard fell under his brother's influence after Heinrich informed him that Paula was not an "innocent girl". When it was decided to break off the engagement, Heinrich was once again dissatisfied. This time, he was outraged by his brother's reaction: "Gebhard went for it without any problems. He seems quite pleased. As if he had no soul, and like a poodle shook off the dust from himself. When Paula was notified of the termination of the engagement, she wrote a letter to her former lover, in which she reproached her failed fiancé that "he does not have the courage to confront Henry." It was amazing to her how "your younger brother could imagine that he had the right to educate me on the basis of some of his personal life experiences." The complex nature of Heinrich Himmler, especially in those days, is the best way to characterize the continuation of this story. In March 1924 (that is, when the engagement was already officially terminated), Heinrich hired a private detective who was supposed to collect information discrediting Paula. This he wanted to contribute

spreading unsightly rumors about his brother's ex-fiancee.

Already the "Paula case" showed that Heinrich Himmler had a pathological passion for interfering in personal affairs, collecting even the smallest details from his intimate life. At that time, these were people close to him. However, the possession of this compromising evidence allowed him to look arrogant and self-confident in the company of friends. In some cases, Heinrich was able to impress when he assumed the pose of a lone hero. In June 1924, Himmler received a letter from his longtime girlfriend, which she wrote more than six months ago, but still did not dare to send. It was about Maria (Mariel) Rauschmeier, the daughter of a Munich professor who was friends with Himmler Sr. By the way, Marielle very often appeared on the pages of Himmler's diary. He considered her "a very sensible, honest girl with a strong character, who deserved the deepest respect." Maria Rauschmeier was a political associate of Heinrich Himmler. She supported the Hitler putsch of 1923 and fiercely hated the Weimar Republic. In her letter, she described her feelings when she saw Heinrich Himmler in front of the military command building on November 9, 1923. She did not hide her delight. Himmler kept this letter in his personal papers for many years.

If we turn to the list of literature that Heinrich Himmler read in 1923-1924, we can find that he was actively searching for an ideology or worldview that would correspond to his psychological mood. Against the backdrop of numerous articles on the "Jewish question", racial doctrines, criticism of democracy, Heinrich Himmler's pronounced passion for mysticism catches the eye. He

studies works on astrology, hypnosis, "sidereal force", telepathy, in which he tries to find a "rational kernel". Then he gets acquainted with the "mystery of the pyramid of Cheops." It was at this time that Heinrich begins to believe that he is able to contact the souls of dead people. Such notions did not arise out of nowhere. Back in 1921, he re-read the book several times, which provided evidence of life after death. Later, these views resulted in the fact that Himmler, who was already the Reichsfuehrer of the SS, believed in reincarnation - the transmigration of souls. Many of the books he read contributed to the formation of the faith that Himmler would later plant in the SS. For example, "The Life of Jesus" by Ernst Renan was used by him in order to refute the Jewish origin of Christ, and the book of Ernst Haeckel "The World Riddle" served to criticize the monistic system of the world. Despite the fact that Himmler was gradually moving away from Catholicism, disbelief, atheism, as well as criticism of the evidence for the existence of God, were unacceptable and even disgusting for him.

Heinrich by no means reduces his reading on "Germanic" topics, but, on the contrary, acquires more and more books devoted to German mythology and legends. In particular, he enthusiastically reads the three-volume Werner Jahn. These were Germanic sagas written in the form of adventure novels, so to speak, Karl May for the Germanophile youth. Then he rereads twice the work of Hans Günther "Knight, Death and the Devil", which was dedicated to

"heroic thinking". After reading it again, Heinrich Himmler succinctly wrote in his diary: "A book that conveyed in wise words the feelings that I experienced."

The summer of 1924 was for Himmler not only the time of the formation of his new religious views, but also the period

when he finally decided to link his fate with National Socialism. He decides that he must devote himself entirely to political work, which should become the meaning of his life. At first, he falls into the circle of Gregor Strasser, who at that time was one of the most prominent National Socialists in Lower Bavaria. Despite participating in the "beer putsch", Strasser was not put on trial, he only spent some time in pre-trial detention. While still in prison, in 1924 he put forward his candidacy for the elections to the Landtag. He went on the list of the Völkische block. It was one of the organizations in whose ranks the activists of the banned National Socialist Party moved.

Unexpectedly for everyone, the "Völkische block" scored in the elections

17.4% of the vote. For this reason, Strasser, already a member of the Landtag, had to be released from prison. Immediately after that, he forms the "National Socialist Liberation Movement", which should instead of the NSDAP go to the all-German elections to the Reichstag. Gregor Strasser was a champion of the ideas of "German socialism", which distinguished him from Hitler. Strasser was a spokesman for the ideas of nationalist anti-capitalism, and therefore initially relied on Northern Germany, where he planned to create a powerful National Socialist organization. For this reason, Heinrich Himmler, who remained in Lower Bavaria, was actually left to himself.

Once in "free swimming", Heinrich Himmler was at a loss. In August 1924, he wrote a letter to his acquaintance in Milan, in which he announced that he should lead the National Socialist organization of Lower Bavaria. Heinrich, not without some hidden resentment, reported that "his work will not bring obvious results in the near future, but its fruits will appear over the next years." He saw in

its activities "disinterested service to a great idea and a great cause, in which we cannot count on recognition." However, the conditions for political work were not as bad as Heinrich Himmler portrayed in his letter. In the elections to the Landtag, which took place in December 1924, the Völkische Block received 10% of the votes in Landshut (this is where the leadership of the National Socialists of Lower Bavaria was located). The bloc became the third force, second in popularity only to the Social Democrats and the Bavarian People's Party. It is immediately necessary to pay attention to the fact that in general, in Bavaria, the National Socialists received 5.1% of the votes, and in the elections to the Reichstag 3% of the votes. And so, things were going quite well in Landshut.

Meanwhile, in December 1924, Adolf Hitler was released. A year later, he re-founded the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP). The ban on its activities was lifted only after Hitler gave guarantees of his legal activities and loyalty to the Bavarian government. After that, Himmler, who was in Landshut, had to drag the National Socialists, whom Gregor Strasser had gathered in his National Socialist Liberation Movement, into the NSDAP. However, it was not as easy as it might seem at first glance. In July 1925, the head office of the NSDAP complained to Gregor Strasser that not a single new form for joining the party, nor a pfennig of membership dues, had arrived in Munich. As a result, in August 1925, Himmler was called to Munich "on the carpet." He had to give explanations about the failed transfer to the NSDAP of thousands of party members who formed 25 organizational groups in Lower Bavaria. Himmler said that "it goes without saying" that he should not have done business with Max Ammann, head of the party publishing house. six months ago between

Ammann and Himmler already had a conflict. The cause of organizational problems was by no means only Himmler's ambition. The conflict between Munich and Landshut could flare up though

would be because Heinrich Himmler simply did not have enough time for clerical work. He preferred to be a speaker, and therefore could not meet the deadlines allotted to him.

As a result, sending applications for joining the NSDAP and membership fees dragged on for several months. In his defense, Himmler, either naively or ironically, declared that the inhabitants of Lower Bavaria had an innate antipathy to written statements and other formalities. There were also ideological differences. For example, in Landshut they were interested in why Anton Drexler, who was considered one of the founders of the German Workers' Party, which later turned into the NSDAP, did not come to their events. Of course, it was known in Lower Bavaria that Hitler by that time had effectively deprived Drexler of all posts in the party. However, one cannot but admit that Himmler also had his merits. So, for example, in Munich they were nevertheless forced to recognize the official existence of the local NSDAP organization in Landshut, and the Lower Bavaria Courier published by it (circulation of 4,000 copies) was recognized as a party publication. Over time, Himmler himself began to "correct" himself. When on May 2, 1926, he reported on his activities in Munich, he was already operating with clear figures.

However, it is impossible not to notice that Heinrich Himmler was not a pedantic and diligent clerical worker, more precisely, a party bureaucrat who managed all affairs while sitting at his desk. He was a real organizer, who constantly traveled around all the local groups and cells of the party. For example, in the period from November 1925 to May 1926, he took part in 27 events

(rallies, meetings, processions). In addition, he visited Westphalia, Northern Germany, Hamburg, Schleswig, Mecklenburg 20 times. At that time, he could be considered one of the most active Bavarian National Socialists. To all this must be added the editing of the Lower Bavaria Courier. However, it should be noted that in his speeches Himmler began to gradually move from criticism of capitalism to anti-Semitic slogans.

On October 9, 1924, he published a large anti-Semitic article in the Party Gazette, which dealt with the problem of the "Jewish media". He even reproached the Jews for the fact that "the modern means of wireless telephony [radio], which could serve as a means of educating the whole people, has turned into entertainment" which is "undoubtedly controlled by Jewish merchants." Some time later, Himmler in his speeches refers to the theme of Freemasonry. However, in his mind, he sticks to his own plan. Himmler begins to think about the formation of an elite, which was to be modeled after the Indian military caste: "We must be kshatriyas! This is our salvation." Moreover, in private conversations, Himmler repeatedly expresses thoughts that were not intended for the peasants of Lower Bavaria. He believes that the National Socialists could learn from the Freemasons how to create a "small but perfectly functioning organization."

Meanwhile, an agricultural crisis began in the country. Many peasants found themselves in debt, many went bankrupt. In this situation, Himmler decided to use his education. He mixed his agronomic knowledge with anti-Semitic rhetoric. In particular, he spoke of the need to rid the German peasants of "Jewish oppression." As an example, he cited information about the conscious

inflated prices for mineral fertilizers, about the conspiracy of exchange traders who intended to buy their products from the peasants at minimum prices. An article written on the subject was even published in the National Socialist Correspondence, the central NSDAP press organ in northern Germany. This suggests that, at least until the autumn of 1925, Himmler adhered to Strasser's ideas, which spoke of "German national socialism" (not to be confused with National Socialism). One does not have to be a prophet to predict that after Himmler's speeches, new party cells appeared in Lower Bavaria, and many peasants joined the NSDAP. Things got to the point that Himmler was invited to speak to the peasants of other German lands. So, for example, an eyewitness described that the performance in Westphalia ended in a uniform triumph.

Meanwhile, Adolf Hitler began to form around himself the halo of the "martyr" of the failed coup, which was one of the components of the new "myth of the leader." Gregor Strasser, who considered himself the real organizational leader of the NSDAP, saw in Hitler only a "useful speaker movement". But the publication of the book "My Struggle" somewhat changed the balance of power. It cannot be said that this book, written by Hitler, immediately began to be perceived as the "bible of Nazism." It was read in party circles, but nothing more. Heinrich Himmler was no exception. First, he read the first volume of My Struggle, after which he made an entry in his diary: "A lot of bitter truth. However, the first chapters about his own youth are frankly weak. He read the second volume of My Struggle in December 1927. And again there was a discreet note that he agreed with some of Hitler's ideas. There was not even a hint in these notes that Himmler read My Struggle with some delightful rapture. Moreover, at that time he did not even perceive Hitler as the Fuhrer.

If we consider Himmler's oratorical activity during this period, it will be possible to understand why he did not have enough time to carry out bureaucratic assignments. He visited his office in Landshut literally by raids. Himmler believed that personal contact with people was much more important than correctly filled out pieces of paper. In addition, the young activist did not intend to abandon the "military training" in which he had constantly participated since 1918. Here he could count on the shooting and tourist union "Tell", which was the successor to the once disbanded volunteer corps "Landshut". In 1926, the Tell Union came to the attention of the police. Himmler managed to move out of the NSDAP office, which was located in the same building as the board of the Tell Union, just a few hours before the searches began there. During interrogations, Himmler stated that the Tell union was engaged exclusively in the "physical and spiritual education of young people." However, during the searches that took place at Himmler and Major Mahler, who, in fact, headed the Tell union, documents were found confirming that members of the union used infantry weapons during training. This was also confirmed by a Lieutenant of the Reichswehr. But it was after these testimonies that the police dropped the case. Law enforcement agencies preferred not to get involved in cases in which the Reichswehr was involved.

So, left to himself, Heinrich Himmler turned 26 years old. He was one of the youngest leaders in the NSDAP. Acquaintance with Gregor Strasser brought its (sometimes quite unexpected) results. In April 1926, a guest from the Rhineland arrived in Lower Bavaria. It was a young agitator whose name was Joseph Goebbels. Like Himmler, he constantly kept a diary. After meeting Heinrich Himmler, Goebbels wrote: "I was in Landshut. Himmler is a good guy with a lot of intelligence."

Chapter 8

In September 1926, Gregor Strasser was appointed head of propaganda for the NSDAP. This appointment was part of an intra-party reshuffling, which had as its cause a long-brewing conflict between the "Munich center" and the "left wing", which was primarily represented by the "Workers' Association of the North-Western Gauleiters of the NSDAP". Prominent figures of the "left wing" received good posts in the party apparatus, which allowed Hitler to fragment and weaken the intra-party opposition. This happened in February 1926 at the so-called Bamberg meeting of the Gauleiters, when in exchange for posts they were forced to recognize Hitler as the "Führer" to whom they were supposed to obey.

If we talk about the most important appointments of the "Left National Socialists", then in addition to Gregor Strasser, we must mention Joseph Goebbels, who was proclaimed Gauleiter of Berlin, and Franz Pfeffer Salomon, who was placed at the head of the assault detachments. Immediately after that, he began to call himself Franz von Pfeffer. At the indicated time, Heinrich Himmler accompanied Gregor Strasser more than once during his visits to Munich as his deputy. At the end of January 1927, Strasser informed the party leadership that he had officially instructed his deputy to lead the Gau of Lower Bavaria.

The specified time can be regarded as a period of increasing influence of Gregor Strasser. He deliberately put von Pfeffer at the head of the NSDAP assault troops, who believed that the SA should have continued the tradition of paramilitaries from the early years of the republic. It cannot be said that talented people were at the head of the SA, but they could,

like Heinrich Himmler, to work independently, without looking back at the "Munich center". After that, the National Socialist Party was, as it were, divided into two parts: on the one hand there was a political organization, on the other hand, in fact, independent assault detachments. It would be a mistake to say that Hitler was too upset by this development. He was pleased that he managed to retain the "title" of the Führer, and therefore, in a characteristic manner for himself, he preferred to observe from the outside the struggle between individual functionaries and party structures, which allowed him, under certain conditions, to act as an arbitrator. In the Third Reich, this process will become ubiquitous and will be called the "struggle of competencies."

Heinrich Himmler was able to expand the competence of his activities when Gregor Strasser, who was in charge of party propaganda, was elected a member of the Reichstag. Since Strasser was appointed organizational leader of the party in January 1928, Himmler found himself included in the party hierarchy. At that time, he was mainly occupied with organizational issues: he corresponded with local NSDAP groups, sent propaganda materials to the localities, demanded reports, etc. At the same time, Himmler tried to unify the various propaganda and agitation activities of the NSDAP, completely subordinate them to the propaganda leadership of the NSDAP. To this end, since October 1926, he began to publish "numbered" appeals and appeals in the party press. In the spring of 1927, Heinrich Himmler prepared the pamphlet Propaganda, in which he gave practical advice on how to conduct agitation. In addition, he was charged with the responsibility of coordinating the actions of party speakers, who had to coordinate their speeches with the leadership of the NSDAP. He had to pay special attention to the preparation of events at which

Hitler's speech is scheduled. Such meetings were still considered one of the most effective means of agitation.

Himmler tried to use his job as the Reich's Deputy Chief of Propaganda to set up an extensive intra-party liaison service. On two pages of a pamphlet he wrote, he listed thirteen types of messages that were to be constantly received from local organizations. Even then, he tried to prove himself as a tough leader: "Failure to comply with the deadlines for providing information entails a disciplinary sanction, and if necessary, this misconduct can be reported to the Führer." What information interested Heinrich Himmler? First of all, the number of Jews living in specific settlements, their age, professions, as well as the share of the Jewish population in the total population. In addition, he wanted to know everything about the activities of the Freemasons, about the most "dangerous opponents of the Party", about cases of attacks by anti-fascists on National Socialists, about all cases related to attempts to arrest members of the Party, etc.

A brochure prepared by Heinrich Himmler shows that, on the one hand, he needed an organization under his control, and on the other hand, he had an obvious craving for compromising evidence, which, he believed, allowed him to control the situation. However, due to his habit, Heinrich Himmler decided not to limit himself to purely paper work. Records and notes of that time indicate that he was constantly on the road. He traveled not only throughout Bavaria, including the Gau "Lower Bavaria" entrusted to him, but also throughout Germany. When elections to the Landtag were held in Thuringia, in January 1927 he spoke at rallies there. In early February, he ends up in Westphalia. Visits the Ruhr in April. In May

resides in Mecklenburg. On the way back to Bavaria, he stops first in Potsdam, then in Chemnitz. In July he could be seen in Vienna, and in mid-October in Hesse. Such trips were actually constant, they were never interrupted.

If we talk about Himmler's speeches of this period, then they clearly showed an anti-capitalist note, which was inherent in Gregor Strasser and the "left wing" rallied around him. For example, he constantly repeated the thesis that "socialism is a natural economic system, and capitalism is unnatural." From himself, Himmler added that in history the "socialist" and "capitalist" phases of development succeeded each other. As "socialist" periods in German history, he defined the Peasant Wars, the era of Friedrich II, the transformation of Baron von Stein. However, all these eras and their achievements were undermined by the "capitalist spirit". "Capitalism has taken the throne again. Now people were not interested in how honest this or that guy was, but how much money he had. At the same time, they do not ask the question, where did this money come from? Everyone just thinks how profitable this person can be for me. Capitalism used the highest product of the human spirit - technology - to enslave people. This directs people to freedom, but their free will was directed into the mainstream of the class struggle. The German bourgeoisie until 1918 was not in a position to understand what socialism was fighting for. In some cases, Heinrich Himmler was not even afraid to compare National Socialists and Communists. "The National Socialists and the "Rot Front" have the same veins. The Jews tried to direct the revolution along the Marxist path, and therefore it was not carried out to the end. Therefore, the question of revolution is again on the agenda. Today, as never before, the desire for socialism is strong. However, in most cases, Heinrich Himmler

mixed anti-capitalist and anti-Semitic slogans. In April 1927, he declared: "The Jews have adopted capitalism and, in the struggle for their own dominion, are able to deftly oppose it to internationalism. Internationalism does not matter to an individual people, it was designed to enslave the working people of the whole world. To avoid this sad fate, there is only one way out - the unification of the German people on a national platform in the name of establishing a socialist state regime. This goal can only be achieved by a powerful national and socialist party of all German working people.

Meanwhile, it should be noted that Himmler's position in the imperial leadership of the NSDAP was rather shaky. During the elections to the Landtag of Saxony, the party received only 1.6% of the votes, in the elections to the Landtag of Mecklenburg - 1.7% of the votes. Local party functionaries preferred to blame the newly appointed deputy imperial propaganda chief, that is, Heinrich Himmler, for everything. In January 1927, elections were held for the Landtag of Thuringia. Previously, one of the local party members wrote to Munich: "If the election campaign continues in the same way as in Mecklenburg and Saxony, then we can immediately assume that the results will be deplorable. Therefore, I ask the imperial leadership to do whatever they want, but in our elections there was not that aimless confusion, as in Saxony. However, Heinrich Himmler could hardly do anything. The party did not have large financial resources, in addition, its popularity was steadily declining, which was caused by the so-called stabilization of the republic. As a result, the National Socialists in Thuringia received 3.5% of the vote, which could be considered a political failure. However, Heinrich Himmler did not think to despair. He, as always, wanted to approach the problem systematically. He believed that the country should have been covered with a net

political speakers. He even established certain assessments of oratory: W - high, P - satisfactory, I - mediocre. As a result, Himmler planned to hold 300 rallies with the participation of speakers of category I, about 70 with category P and about 50 with category S. Himmler set this number of rallies and meetings to organize another election campaign in Mecklenburg. However, this plan failed. The reason for this lay in Himmler's excessive demands. He intended to admit a local organization to the elections only if it met some formal criteria. A month before the start of the election campaign, Himmler demanded to show him guarantees of the efficiency of the local organization, which was to be expressed in the submission of 3,000 signatures and a conditional "deposit" of 3,000 Reichsmarks. If these two conditions were not met in time, then Himmler threatened to keep the Mecklenburg National Socialists out of the elections.

The Gau Mecklenburg-Lübeck were stunned by this demand. There it was decided to start the election campaign without waiting for permission from Munich. When Himmler recommended focusing on the last two weeks before the elections, in order to use all the forces and resources at that time, one of the local party members considered that this was "nonsense." Indignant letters poured into Munich. In order to still get permission to start agitation, I had to contact Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy for the party. After that, Himmler was able to explain to Hitler his position on this issue. In a reply letter with characteristic sarcasm, Himmler reported to Mecklenburg that "herr Hitler" fully agreed with his "nonsense." However, the Mecklenburg election plan was thwarted. Of the planned 400 events, only 106 were held.

As a result, the National Socialists received only 5611 votes (1.8%). In the elections that followed in February 1928 in Hamburg, the results were no better - 2.2% of the vote. During the elections to the Reichstag, which took place on May 20, 1928, the NSDAP received 2.6%. The party could only celebrate success in some rural areas. Meanwhile, the party leadership (primarily under the influence of Gregor Strasser) insisted that in the urban environment it was necessary to win over the voter from the left parties. It should not be assumed that the failure of the NSDAP in the elections was the result of a certain incompetence of Heinrich Himmler. Even under the current conditions, his proposals regarding the conduct of the election campaign seem more than justified. Moreover, it is possible that the relative success of the National Socialists among the peasant population was precisely his merit.

What was Himmler's plan? He believed that from time to time in all German lands it was necessary to hold major campaign events. During the highest pre-election activity, it was necessary to carry out from 70 to 200 actions per week. It was especially necessary to work with the independent press. Despite the rationality, Himmler's plan was still schematic. In addition, he clearly overestimated the capabilities of local party structures. Many of the local NSDAP groups were underdeveloped, and therefore it was hardly possible for them to organize anything at all. In addition, party structures were in dire need of talented speakers and competent agitators. Taking this circumstance into account, Heinrich Himmler began to insist on the creation of special training courses designed to train the propaganda corps. He planned that the "oratorical school of the NSDAP" would be headed by the Thuringian Gauleiter Fritz Reinhard. Looking ahead, it should be noted that some time later, the National Socialists will adopt the tactics of "big actions" proposed by Heinrich Himmler. Targeted propaganda

processing of regions will reach its peak in 1930-1932, TO is on the eve of Hitler's arrival to authorities.

It is not worth denying the fact that at the time described, Himmler was unnecessarily rude and even arrogant. His demeanor greatly annoyed many of the provincial National Socialists. One such story occurred in October 1928, when the party newspaper West German Observer asked for "25 points", that is, the NSDAP program. The fact is that it had to be printed in a special format on the pages of the newspaper. However, Heinrich Himmler did not understand the request. He suggested that in Cologne, where the indicated newspaper was published, they did not know the party program. As a result, he reacted in his characteristic caustic and even insulting manner. He recommended "to look into the party card more often." The misunderstanding nearly turned into a scandal. Members of the NSDAP from Cologne sent an appeal to the party leadership, in which they said that Heinrich Himmler had no right to insult "party members who made considerable sacrifices in the name of our movement." The letter ended with an accusation of bureaucracy. Himmler himself preferred to justify his intemperance by the fact that he once showed "two gentlemen from the leadership" the mentioned letter of request. At that time, Himmler almost constantly preferred to refer to either Hitler or someone from the party leadership. This can explain the fact that his party career did not end in the 20s. In addition, Heinrich Himmler had a strong patron in the person of Gregor Strasser, who, if necessary, could cover his back. Despite the fact that Himmler gradually became one of the people close to the Führer, he still did not have

no personal relationship with "Herr Hitler". Their meetings were isolated. Probably at this time, Hitler started his boring monologues. In addition, it is very significant

the circumstance that already during the years of the National Socialist dictatorship, Himmler actually never recalled the episodes of the "age of struggle" that would connect him with the name of the Führer. Ultimately, the Deputy Reich Propaganda Director in 1927-1928 was an inconspicuous party clerk, with whom Hitler preferred to keep a certain distance.

In those years, Heinrich Himmler was perceived in the NSDAP not so much as a propagandist, but as an expert on agricultural issues. It was in this capacity that he developed a kind of agrarian-political program of the National Socialists, which he preferred to call "völkische peasant policy." Heinrich Himmler formulated a significant part of the ideas that formed the basis of the "völkisch peasant policy" in the process of communicating with the Artamany organization. The Artamans movement arose in 1924. By 1927, it took shape in a close-knit organization, which was officially called the Artam union. It was a youth völkisch organization that initially focused on helping agriculture in the eastern lands of Germany, in order to thereby oust the Polish population. For the most part, the "Artamans" were urban youth who idealized communication with the "earth". By the end of the 20s, about 2 thousand young people were in the ranks of the union. They considered hard work in the countryside as a voluntary labor service, which they planned to turn into the first stage of "internal colonization" of the "German East". Several attempts were even made to create their own agricultural settlements.

Artamans adhered to the ideas of "blood and soil", on the basis of which a specific racist ideology arose, characterized by utopian anti-urbanism. From the very beginning

the ideology of the Artamans was close to the National Socialist worldview. Many of the young people were members of the NSDAP. Friedrich Schmidt, who was the union's chancellor from 1925 to 1927, became the head of the NSDAP's main education department in the mid-1930s. His successor as union chancellor, Hans Holfelder, also maintained close ties with the National Socialists. It was through him that Heinrich Himmler was linked to the Artamans organization. Their principles were very reminiscent of the ideas that Himmler nurtured in the early 1920s. He could not help but be attracted by the orientation towards the Spartan lifestyle, moderation in the use of alcoholic beverages, cessation of smoking, renunciation of sexual promiscuity, glorification of Germanic antiquity. In 1928, Himmler actually became the leader of the Bavarian artamans. Officially, a branch of the union appeared here only in January 1929, that is, a few weeks after Himmler was appointed Reichsführer SS. It is significant that the office of the Bavarian Artamans was located in the building of the imperial leadership of the NSDAP (Munich). This allowed Himmler to do double work right away. However, the affairs of the "Artam" union did not take him too much time. The fact is that in Bavaria this organization was developed very poorly, and there were only 20 people in the local branch.

In fact, no information has been preserved about the specific activities of Himmler among the Artamans. It is only known that he twice took part in their all-imperial rallies. It can be assumed that his main task was to establish productive communication between the Artamans and the National Socialists. There is no doubt that this direction of Himmler's activity was sanctioned by the leadership of the party, and was by no means

amateur performance.

Running a little ahead, we can say that at the end of the 1920s, serious internal contradictions were revealed in the Artam union. A conflict broke out between the two extreme factions. On one side were the moderate bündish, who wanted to focus on working with youth, on the other side, the völkisch, who advocated the subjugation of the NSDAP union. Himmler naturally supported the second group. On December 21, 1929, the moderate wing of the union tried to remove the leadership of the organization, which was oriented towards the National Socialists. The coup was successful. Friedrich Schmidt immediately informed Heinrich of this

Himmler, urging him to exclude the "rebels" from the members of the NSDAP. However, Himmler was in no hurry to act - he decided to wait. After the split, the radical wing created the Artamany association, which continued to maintain ties with the NSDAP. It was in this new organization that Himmler met Richard Walter Darre, the official creator of the "blood and soil" ideology, who in 1930 was asked to head the agrarian political apparatus of the NSDAP. As a retaliatory step, Darre tried to pour all the Artamans into the NSDAP.

Himmler's agrarian and political activities at the end of the 1920s were not limited to contacts with the Artamans and the creation of his own ideology. For some time he edited the weekly newspaper "Peasant's Shoe", which had the subtitle: "The Fighting Herald of the Awakening Peasantry." The first issue of this edition was published on May 2, 1929. In it, Himmler explained to the reader why the newspaper had such a strange (at first glance) name. The shoe was used as a symbol by secret organizations during the Peasants' War. The newspaper itself consisted half of practical advice that could help the peasants, and half of

political articles, anti-Semitic appeals and announcements given by artamans.

Chapter 9

In 1927, an acquaintance took place that changed a lot in the life of Heinrich Himmler.

He met Margaret Sigrot, who would later become his wife. In his pocket calendar, Himmler boldly circled the date 12 September. It may have been the day he first saw Margaret. Based on this version, their acquaintance took place in the Bavarian town of Sulzbach, where Heinrich Himmler spoke that day in one of his propaganda speeches. However, Katrin Himmler tells a slightly different version of this acquaintance. She believes that this happened in December 1926 at the Reyhanhall resort. Then Heinrich Himmler got caught in the pouring rain, from which he decided to hide in the nearest hotel. In the central hall, he swung his soaked hunting hat so hard that he sprayed a woman standing nearby. This was Margareta Siegrot, who arrived in this town on vacation.

Katrin Himmler describes her as a beautiful woman, with blue eyes and amazing long blond hair. However, when studying the photographs in which Margaret was captured, one can hardly find signs of not only beauty, but also good looks. Considering how demanding Himmler was about the "female ideal", his choice cannot but amaze. Margareta was an ordinary nurse. Margaret Sigroth (nee Boden) grew up in a family where, in addition to her, four more brothers and sisters were brought up. Her family came from Pomerania. During the First World War, she got a job as a nurse in a military hospital, which became her main profession. So

In time, she used part of her father's inheritance received by her to create her own small medical clinic. However, its maintenance turned out to be troublesome. After the divorce that almost immediately followed her first failed marriage, she barely made ends meet. Heinrich did not immediately dare to tell his parents about his relationship with Margareta. First, she was divorced. Secondly, she was seven years older than him. Thirdly, she was an evangelical Prussian, which could hardly have enthralled the Catholic Bavarians. The first to know about Heinrich's love affair was his brother Gebhard. At that time, the brothers completely trusted each other. Heinrich himself once told him that "it would be better to go into a hall full of a thousand communists than to share this secret with your parents."

Letters that Margareta wrote to Henry have survived. The researchers could not find any response letters, but it does not follow from this that they did not exist at all. For the letters received by Margareta's OT, Heinrich kept a special list, in which he noted with customary accuracy the day and hour when it was delivered. From these reports, it followed that Himmler regularly sent newspaper clippings in his letters, which reported on his travels around the country and

speeches. Margareta, on the other hand, could only express concern about the busy work schedule and the difficulties associated with it. She inquired more than once about the health of Heinrich Himmler.

By November 1927, the correspondence becomes quite personal. In one of his letters, Henry hinted that he was disappointed by Margareta's last letter. The same answered: "I suppose you noticed that you received two letters in such a short time?" Apparently, Marga, as her acquaintances called this young woman, did not understand what caused the "disappointment". She repeatedly tried to get an answer,

but Heinrich Himmler preferred to sidestep the issue. Already from the first letters it became clear that Margareta was a woman disappointed with life. She wrote to Heinrich: "All your letters invariably speak of "distrust" on my part. Yes, I really have to be. I lost faith in people, especially in the honesty and frankness of a man towards a woman. To be naive to believe is much worse than to be incredulous. I'm just afraid to believe in the veracity of the words. However, she did not mind continuing the acquaintance, for which a semblance of a date was appointed, which was supposed to take place in Berlin. The meeting took place in December 1927, as already mentioned, in Berlin. Heinrich Himmler was tired of posing as impregnability and the very male virtue. In any case, it was after the meeting in Berlin that Margareta Sigrot began to address Heinrich Himmler in letters to "you." Moreover, the appeals themselves have become frivolous. Often used the phrase: "my dear stubborn." As a result, the woman nevertheless asked what she was supposed to call Himmler in her personal correspondence. He suggested calling him a diminutive name - Heini. In response, a sly question was asked: "That is usually the name of the boys. But you are already big. Or are things different?"

In dealing with Margareta, Heinrich Himmler, out of habit, preferred to take a heroic pose. As follows from her letters, in the very first lines he began to characterize himself as a "Landsknecht" ("We Landsknechts must remain alone and be above the laws"). However, the "Landsknecht" did not hesitate to admit his own weaknesses in correspondence. For example, Himmler was very sorry that he continued to show "pliability" in relation to his parents. In response, Margareta reassured that with the character of Henry it was impossible to immediately change in such a way that it would become noticeable to absolutely everyone.

A logical question may arise, what connected Heinrich Himmler and Margareta? They came from different circles, belonged to different social strata. It turns out that they had a common interest in medicinal herbs and homeopathy. Both Heinrich and Margareta dreamed of owning a small plot of land where they would raise chickens, vegetables, and grow medicinal plants. In addition, they both loved riddles, charades, crossword puzzles, which already in those days began to be printed in separate brochures. During short meetings, this was their only remedy for boredom. Margareta, a week before the dates, asked Heinrich to stock up on books with riddles, so that "they would have something to do." This phrase alone indicates that for a long time the relationship between Henry and Margareta was predominantly platonic. Over time, Himmler began to give his friend books that were devoted to exposing the "Masonic conspiracy." This was followed by literature on the "Jewish question".

Gradually, political topics began to flicker in the correspondence between Henry and Margareta.

For example, Himmler repeatedly expressed his fierce rejection of large cities, which he considered "the death of the nation." Margareta tried with gentle irony to eliminate these fears: "You should not be afraid of the "big cities", trust me to take care of you so that I can protect you." Often, Margareta was interested in stomach pains, which in the second half of the 1920s bothered Himmler almost constantly. As can be seen from Margareta's letters, Himmler believed that his stomach problems were psychosomatic in nature. He believed that the pains were the result of his incredible efforts to maintain self-control and self-discipline. In addition, it is possible that

Himmler was clearly unhappy with his appearance. This is indicated by the words that Margareta wrote in one of the letters. She commented on one of the sent photos: "Why did you cover your face with your hand? Do you need to hide your chin? Indeed, the weakly expressed chin did not correspond much to the image of the "heroic soldier".

It should be noted that both Heinrich and Margareta doubted the sincerity of their relationship for a long time. The woman repeatedly wondered if Henry considered their relationship a burden, if he doubted that her love was as strong as his for her. "My love should not be a burden to you. She will never be intrusive. But you have not yet reached the point where you can speak honestly with me. You don't answer me when I ask how you feel deep down." It is possible that Margareta feared that she wrote Henry too many letters. By and large, the love relationship between Margareta and Heinrich Himmler developed very difficult. She wrote: "I can't imagine love without grief and sadness... You don't know how sad I am now... Do you doubt my love? I can safely assure you that no woman will love you as much as I love.

At the end of 1927, Heinrich Himmler went to his parents' house to spend all the holidays there. With his father, he mostly talked about the tactics of street fighting. Margareta, who, although she was a German nationalist, still did not share the radical ideas of Himmler. "Why are you constantly bloodthirsty grabbing a knife? she asked, referring to Himmler's desire for vigorous action. "You should be more conservative." In addition, Margareta believed that the National Socialist Party used Heinrich without giving him anything in return. "I cannot understand how one can obey the party so unquestioningly that in

ended up not

have time to write a small letter. These gentlemen have no right to exploit you so harshly. They probably sleep more and work less. It runs the risk of ending up sick and tired." It is possible that Himmler, who did not dare to develop his relationship with Margareta, often "hid behind" official business in order to avoid some of the dates. In the first months of 1928, they met only a few times: in January - in Bavaria, in February - in Berlin, then in April - again in Berlin, in May - in Munich. Margareta tried more than once to talk about a possible life together, but Heinrich Himmler could not say anything definite.

As the general plans for the future became clearer, Margareta attached less importance to her independent existence as the head of the medical clinic. In her letters, she informed Heinrich that parting with the clinic in which she spent four years would happen easily, since in it she constantly encountered "human meanness", and therefore all the memories associated with this institution annoy her. However, under these conditions, Margareta feared that she would be completely alone in an unfamiliar area. Himmler did not always follow her lead. So, for example, literally on the eve of the wedding, heated debates broke out more than once, where the wedding was to take place: in Berlin or in Munich. In addition, Margareta resolutely refused a honeymoon trip. She did not immediately agree to the sale of her clinic. And after that, she rejected the idea of acquiring her own house in the vicinity of Munich. She never wanted to be a housewife. In one of the letters, she said: "You are going to turn into a tradesman. I won't let you. If you want to cook in the kitchen, then you have to take on all the women's

household chores."

Such a change in social roles could not suit Heinrich Himmler.

The letters that Margareta wrote were filled with many doubts about the fact that she and Heinrich could have a common future. Once she reported that her friend dissuaded her from marrying a man who was seven years younger.

For this reason, she insisted that the groom had to come to terms with the fact that he would soon part with a free bachelor life: "In the theater and in the cinema, you were thirsty for entertainment

man. However, you will have a loved one, and therefore all these entertainments should become rare. After that, Himmler sent a response letter in which he asked for a list of all wishes and requirements. This annoyed Margaret quite a bit. She wrote indignantly: "Never write again: firstly, secondly, thirdly. You act like an official." However, Margareta experienced real fear before the upcoming acquaintance with Heinrich's parents. This fear has turned into a uniform phobia, panic horror. This indicates that Margareta was very difficult to get along with people she did not know.

Most likely in February 1928, Heinrich Himmler and Margareta decided to marry. She still decided to sell her clinic. In the end, she agreed on a price of 12,000 Reichsmarks, which was not a very large amount. Influenced by anti-Semitic ideas, she wrote: "Oh, that Hauschildt! A Jew will remain a Jew. But others are no better - they are all smeared with the same world. Himmler told his parents about his intention to marry around the spring of 1928. However, he decided for the time being to omit some details from the biography of his bride. For this reason

one could note a change in attitude towards the upcoming marriage of the mother of Heinrich Himmler. In April 1928, she wrote to her son that she sincerely wishes him "to find a life partner who will share joys and sorrows with him." After that, a day was chosen to meet the bride. At the same time, the father must have been present. It must be said that, despite the fact that not a single harsh word was said during the meeting, Margareta's fears were not groundless. Some time later, Henry received a letter from his mother in which she did not hide her horror: her son's bride was an elderly and divorced Lutheran! This was a violation of all the rules and decency that followed in the Himmler family. However, Heinrich Himmler's father was more restrained in his reactions. In the end, both parents decided to receive Margaret as graciously as possible. When she lived in Munich in May 1928, they certainly wanted her to stay at her parents' house. Margaret herself very reluctantly accepted this proposal.

After the parents came to terms with the choice of Heinrich, they began to look for a suitable home for him. The father regularly sent his son clippings from newspapers that reported on the sale of houses. As a result, a wooden building in Waldtrudering was purchased. This place could be called the eastern outskirts of Munich. All worries about home improvement, furniture purchase were shifted to the shoulders of Heinrich Himmler, since Margareta continued to work in Berlin until the very wedding. Henry, for the first time in many years that he was in distress, felt a taste for the "good life." Margareta in those days was quite worried that her "dowry" was in danger of running out too quickly. "I don't know how we will pay for all this. I ask you not to buy anything else," she wrote on June 27, 1928, literally on the eve of the wedding.

Despite the fact that the house was bought in the vicinity of Munich, the wedding took place on July 3, 1928 in Berlin. The registry office was located in close proximity to the house of Margareta's father. There were very few guests at the wedding. From the side of the bride, her father and brother were present. From the side of the groom there was no one at all. The younger brother Ernst planned to arrive at the wedding as the only guest from the Himmler family, but he could not get to Berlin, as he was taking exams for an engineer. Eleven years later, Heinrich Himmler will be made an honorary resident of the town of Tsepernik, where the bride's family lived. After the wedding, Heinrich persuades his wife to join the NSDAP. They move to Waldtrudering, where they try to raise chickens. However, things are not going well. In addition, Heinrich is constantly on political business trips, and therefore Margareta manages the entire household. Occasionally, Ernst Himmler comes to her, who brings newspapers and brochures with riddles. Margareta can hardly come to terms with

loneliness.

On August 8, 1929, a daughter was born to Margareta and Heinrich Himmler. They decided to baptize her according to the Lutheran rite, and therefore they gave her a pronounced "Nordic" name - Gudrun. However, the birth was very difficult. Therefore, Margareta spent almost a month in a special clinic. When the mother and child arrived home, Himmler tried his best to make them feel

can be more comfortable. However, soon after that he again embarked on political journeys. Himmler Sr. was constantly interested in the well-being of his granddaughter, who, in fact, gave her the nickname "Doll", which was assigned to Gudrun Himmler for almost a lifetime. After the birth of a child, Margareta could not actually do housework, and therefore she had to rely only on the salary of Heinrich Himmler, which he received as a party functionary of the NSDAP.

Chapter 10

For Heinrich Himmler, 1927 was rich in events that later determined his fate. On the one hand, he meets his future wife. On the other hand, in addition to all his posts, in October 1927 he was appointed Deputy Reichsführer SS. At that time, the SS (security detachments of the NSDAP) were still little known to anyone. This was a small group of party activists who were primarily responsible for the protection of major events and security during public appearances of prominent party figures. The question may arise: why was the agitator and specialist in agrarian ideology Heinrich Himmler appointed deputy head of the paramilitary organization? The fact is that Himmler's activities as deputy imperial propaganda chief were almost constantly connected with the planning of major campaign events. He was also responsible for organizing their security. It turns out that, willy-nilly, Himmler was associated with the activities of special units of the National Socialist Party. His appointment to the post of Deputy Reichsführer SS (the head of the SS was then Erhard Heiden) was just an official confirmation of the already existing situation. Do not forget that Himmler had been associated with the activities of the SS until that time. For example, since 1926 he led the SS detachment, which operated on the territory of Lower Bavaria. By and large, the new appointment did not give any privileges - the SS was a tiny formation. Their foundation was laid in 1925. It was then that Adolf Hitler instructed his old friend and personal bodyguard Julius Schreck to create a semblance of a personal guard - the "headquarters guard", which a few weeks later was renamed "security detachments". Attempts to create something similar were made even before the "beer putsch". In March

In 1923, Hitler had already formed a "headquarters guard", on the basis of which the "strike group Adolf Hitler" later arose. Almost all members of the SS that arose in 1925 were at one time part of this "shock group".

The created SS, even in a stylistic sense, continued the traditions of the "shock group Adolf Hitler", although by and large they were not her successors. As a uniform, the "drummers" used gray army jackets, black ski caps, to which they attached a symbol popular among the Freikorps - a skull and crossbones ("Adam's head" or "dead head"). In addition, they wore bandages that were somewhat different from the party ones. A black edging ran along a red field with a white circle and a swastika on both sides. When creating the SS, it was decided to use the past tradition. The SS men wore a brown shirt, traditional for the National Socialists, a black cap with a "dead head" and a black-white-red cockade, black riding breeches.

In September 1925, Julius Schreck sent a circular to all Gaus and independent groups of the NSDAP calling for the formation of "security detachments". At the same time, it was emphasized that the SS was by no means "neither a paramilitary organization, nor a bunch of fellow travelers, but a small formation made up of men on whom our movement and our Führer could rely." The SS planned to recruit party members between the ages of 25 and 35 "strongly built". "They should be the people the old saying goes: one for all and all for one." By and large, the SS have never been and could not be a kind of subdivision of assault squads. It was not even a matter of different subordination and not of different attitudes, selection criteria, etc. When the "security detachments" were formed, the NSDAP simply

officially there were no assault squads. They will be recreated by Hitler's decision in a year later.

Meanwhile, in April 1926, the former commander of the "drummers" Berchtold returned from the Austrian emigration. It was to him that Shrek instructed to command the created SS. The reason that Shrek moved away from this project lay in the widespread prejudice among the party members towards him. In one of the letters addressed to Hitler, it was reported: "Shrek did not possess either the talents of a leader or organizational skills. There is not a single person at his disposal who can guarantee that the SS will become the elite unit of the movement. Let's make a reservation right away - an attempt to turn the SS into a party elite was made for the first time by no means by Heinrich Himmler. Josef Berchtold began to talk about this in 1926. In the circulars he sent out, he wrote that the SS "had to rally the best and most active forces of our movement." He deliberately suggested not to chase the number of the SS, but to rely on the personal qualities of each of the members of the "security detachments". The fact that the new party formation had to have a special purpose became clear to many already in 1926, when Hitler handed over to Berchtold the "banner of blood", a banner "which was stained on November 9, 1923 with the blood of the martyrs." However, Berchtold was unable to pursue an independent policy, eventually submitting to the command of the SA, led by Franz von Pfeffer. In March 1927, Erhard Heiden replaced him as Reichsführer SS, and Heinrich Himmler became his deputy.

Not much is known about Himmler's activities as Deputy Reichsführer SS. However, it follows from the documents that from the very beginning he preferred not to be content with the task of using the SS to protect events, but in every possible way to change the internal structure of the SS. Right after

Assuming his new position, Heinrich Himmler sent his "order No. 1" to the SS, in which he obliged all "guard detachments" to pay their membership fees on time, and also to regularly inform him about everything that happened in the party, as well as about the activities of opponents, "paying special attention on Freemasons and Jewish leaders." Once again, Himmler attempted to create a semblance of an "intelligence service", which at one time he failed to do within purely party structures. Subsequently, Himmler began to edit the weekly printed newsletter, which was called the SS Service. From its pages, he urged SS employees to stay apart during all internal party discussions and disputes, not to take part in dubious events. In addition, Himmler began to insist on the introduction of a uniform uniform for the SS. When he was present at the 1927 party congress, it struck him that most of the SS men independently selected black riding breeches, black caps, and the "dead heads" were of various designs.

In January 1929, Hitler decided to relieve Heiden of his position as Reichsführer-SS. Heinrich Himmler became his successor. Until now, it is not known exactly why it was decided to remove Heiden (the official version is "for family reasons"), and to put Heinrich Himmler in his place. In any case, even under these conditions, Himmler continued to be listed as the deputy head of the imperial propaganda. He held the position of Reichsführer SS, so to speak, part-time. It is no less difficult to say what the real number of "security units" was when Himmler became the Reichsfuehrer SS. It is impossible to rely on the information that Himmler himself gave years later - they fluctuate very much. At various times he spoke of 260, 280, 290 and 300 members of the SS. In the published "SS Guidebooks" (a kind of journal intended for worldview

education) he spoke of 270 members. It is possible that Himmler deliberately underestimated the size of the SS in order to present himself in a more favorable light. Like, it was under him that the number of "security units" began to grow rapidly. In any case, the police report, which is dated May 23, 1929, spoke of 1,402 SS men. In an internal circular from the leadership of the CA on May 4, 1929, it was reported that the SS and "adjacent structures" consisted of 748 people, who were organized according to the "ten" principle. It is unlikely that Heinrich Himmler managed to increase the size of the organization several times over in a few months. The version about the underestimation of the number seems justified, if we take into account that the first

the activities of the new Reichsfuehrer SS were by no means aimed at increasing the size of the SS, but at uniting the organization.

The Congress of the National Socialist Party, which traditionally took place in Nuremberg, was the first serious test for Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler. Despite the fact that the congress was held in August, already on July 6, Himmler sent out an order - every SS employee was to take part in this event. During the apogee of the party congress, the SS had to pass in front of Hitler in a slender column. Himmler did not want to rely on chance, and therefore decided in advance to work out all the smallest details. He personally decided to be responsible for ensuring that each of the members of the "security squads" took with them brushes for boots and for uniforms. Before the parade, he recommended that his wards get enough sleep and, just in case, temporarily introduced a "dry law" into the SS, although alcohol was not sold during the party congress. The SS men were supposed to arrive in Nuremberg according to a clear schedule. Himmler tried to regulate literally everything, including the foods that the SS were allowed to eat during the journey. The SS march made the expected impression. effect from

this action was intensified, since the OH was combined with the presentation of the banners to the CC, which were then intended for the first ten SS assaults (a formation approximately equal to a company). After the end of the congress, the SS marched through Nuremberg in a column led by Heinrich Himmler.

It soon became clear that the new SS Reichsfuehrer actually did not have time to conduct campaign work. He barely appeared in the imperial propaganda manual. In the meantime, in 1929, Hitler offered Joseph Goebbels to head this party department. He was to succeed Gregor Strasser as imperial propaganda chief. By that time, Goebbels, who was the Gauleiter of Berlin, had developed a specific, but at the same time very effective style of propaganda. However, Goebbels was afraid of the intrigues of Otto Strasser (Gregor Strasser's brother is one of the leaders of the "left wing"). Goebbels has repeatedly been accused of selling out to the "Munich moneybags." However, the desire to occupy such a high post prevailed. In this case, Goebbels decided to consult with a potential subordinate, namely Heinrich Himmler, who so far had not been removed from the imperial propaganda leadership. The topic of discussion was the possible deposition of Gregor Strasser and mutual cooperation. After the conversation, Goebbels on the pages of his diary gave a very positive description of Himmler. "I laid the foundations for our future cooperation with him in the field of propaganda. A small thin man. Good-natured, even, perhaps, hesitant. Over the following months, Himmler kept Goebbels informed of all kinds of curiosities in the work of the "Munich leadership." In March 1930, Himmler managed to persuade Goebbels to head the imperial propaganda leadership. Goebbels was expecting an official invitation from Munich.

In April 1930, the "little doctor" (as many called Goebbels behind his back) decided to come to the party capital. From that moment on, the propaganda leadership was divided into two departments. The 1st department was the school of oratory Fritz Reinhard. The 2nd branch reported directly to Joseph Goebbels. He wrote in his diary:

"In the evening, a meeting was held with my new secretary Himmler. We got along very quickly. He's not particularly smart, but he's quite diligent." However, the two party functionaries actually had no time to grind. September 1930 was approaching, when the next elections to the Reichstag were to be held. Their collaboration did not last long. By the end of July 1930, it became clear to Goebbels that he needed to look for a new deputy. As a result, the sensational breakthrough of the NSDAP on the political landscape of Germany formally took place without the participation of Himmler. In the elections to the Reichstag, the National Socialists received 18.3%. However, all the minuses had their pluses. Himmler was able to emerge from the shadow of his superiors, where he had been for many years. Since that time, he has become a prominent political figure. Despite the fact that Himmler was a member of the Reichstag for almost 15 years in a row (1930-1945), he never spoke there. However, the presence of a deputy mandate allowed him to travel freely throughout the country. In addition, Himmler was able to get rid of the finan

bothered him for more than a year. He decided to concentrate solely on his new assignment. From that moment on, he was the Reichsfuehrer SS, and only the Reichsfuehrer SS.

But before Himmler could enjoy his political success, he and his SS had to be put to the test. This was due to the fact that shortly before the elections to the Reichstag, the NSDAP was shaken by one of the most difficult crises, the echoes of which could be observed for several more years. The thing is,

that the long-awaited conflict between the SA and the political organization of the NSDAP broke out. It was on the eve of the elections that the commander of the SA in East Germany, Walter Shtennes, in an ultimatum form, demanded that representatives of the assault detachments be included in the party lists. When this demand was not met, Franz von Pfeffer decided to leave the post of commander of SA. This happened on August 12, 1930. The assault detachments remained virtually uncontrolled. Under these conditions, Stennes announced that he was ceasing to guard all party events. On August 30, stormtroopers captured the Berlin office of the NSDAP. A fight ensued with the SS guards guarding her. The attack was repulsed only with the help of the arrived police squads. Hitler realized that it was necessary, at least formally, to compromise. He arrives in Berlin and delivers a speech to the attack aircraft in which he promises that he will personally lead both the SA and the SS. However, the conflict began to spread rapidly throughout the country. A stormtrooper mutiny broke out in Augsburg. Himmler and Sepp Dietrich urgently arrived there, who managed to defend the local party office. During the following months, similar events took place in Hanau and Dachau. And again, the SS had to defend the party leadership from the attack aircraft. Among the SS and ordinary members of the party, rumors began to spread that the "loyal and honest stormtroopers" were incited to disobedience by the "corrupt and power-obsessed leadership of the assault detachments." Even in 1943, Hitler continued to inspire his entourage that the stormtroopers were not disappointed with something, "Herr Pfeffer and his camarilla were disappointed." The first putsch by Walter Stennes is notable if only for the fact that it was after him that the SS got the slogan "My honor is my loyalty."

At the end of 1930, when the crisis seemed to have passed, Himmler made every effort to divide the SS and SA between them. He even believed that he succeeded. At least Himmler wrote in his diary: "The final separation of the organizational structures and spheres of activity of the SS and SA has occurred." But it was self-indulgence. The final separation occurred only after the events of June 30, 1934, which are better known as the "night of the long knives". Up to this point, Himmler formally continued to obey the leadership of the SA. Separation was out of the question, since in September 1930, Hitler, as promised, personally led both the SA and the SS. However, it was difficult and not very pleasant to deal with the affairs of attack aircraft, and therefore on November 30, 1930, the Fuhrer transferred command of the SA to his old friend Ernst Röhm, who had just returned from Bolivia. This development came as a surprise to many. Ernst Röhm was considered the "godfather" of the assault squads. It was Röhm who, in the early 1920s, was an intermediary between the attack aircraft and the Reichswehr, it was he who supplied the newly born SA with weapons from army warehouses.

However, it was Rem who turned the SA into a paramilitary formation that focused on armed struggle and putschist tactics. After leaving prison, Hitler decided to follow the "legal path", and therefore his paths with Ryom parted ways.

It is very difficult to say why Hitler chose Ernst Röhm again. The rebellious captain had no intention of abandoning his former tactics. He was in fact the diametrical opposite of Hitler, who was able to come to power through democratic procedures. Most likely, this step was a kind of concession to the stormtroopers, who wanted to be led by the "old grunt", and not

parliamentary politician. In addition, Ernst Röhm was not involved in internal party intrigues, was not a protege of any of the opposing cliques. At the beginning of 1931, Röhm joined

a new position - he was appointed chief of staff of the SA, provided that Adolf Hitler formally remained the commander of the assault detachments.

Due to all these circumstances, Heinrich Himmler could forget about the separation of the SA and the SS. The order signed by Röhm on January 16, 1931 stated that the Reichsführer SS was subordinate to the headquarters of the SA command. For Himmler, some consolation could be that he was an old acquaintance of Ryoma. It was with Ernst Röhm that he was the standard-bearer during the "beer putsch". As we remember, Himmler visited Rem several times when he was in prison. While Rohm was in Bolivia, where he served as a military adviser, Himmler, although infrequently, nevertheless corresponded with him. Appointed Reichsführer SS, he was not slow to brag about this to his former boss. Himmler wrote to Pémy in 1930 in Bolivia: "The school that I went through with you has already been felt by the leaders of the SS. By spring, we plan to gather several thousand people." In March 1930, Röhm sent a reply letter in which he said: "I congratulate you on the strengthening of your SS. For me, it has never been in doubt that the work is carried out in the old spirit, and you continue to focus on the "Imperial Battle Flag".

Did Heinrich Himmler know about Ernst Röhm's homosexual inclinations? Hardly. Of course, vague rumors reached him, but he considered them slanderous fabrications of opponents. However, in 1931-1932, irrefutable evidence appeared that Ernst Röhm was a homosexual. However, by this time, Himmler was not at all (from a political point of view) interested in the sexual orientation of his boss. Against the backdrop of unbridled stormtroopers,

who had never been distinguished by restraint and good behavior, the SS seemed to be the most discipline and virtue. For this reason, Himmler was even interested in discrediting SA. The more rumors circulated about attack aircraft, the stronger the position of the SS became.

However, not only Heinrich Himmler wanted to separate the functions of the SA and the SS. Ernst Röhm, in his first order after his appointment, said that all friction and misunderstandings should be eliminated between the attack aircraft and the SS. He assumed that the number of SS should not exceed 10% of the total number of attack aircraft. At the same time, the SA could not campaign in the SS formations, and vice versa. There was also a separation of functional responsibilities. The SA units were supposed to protect the events organized by the NSDAP, and the SS structures were supposed to deal exclusively with the protection of speakers, political leaders and prominent National Socialists who attended these events as guests. During street actions, the SA were to be the basis for propaganda marches, and the SS were to provide the cordon, after which they were to march at the end of the column.

The rapid increase in the size of the SS forced Himmler to carry out some organizational changes. Already in 1930, three areas of SS Oberführers were created. In 1931, new names for SS units were introduced. From that day on, the "security detachments" were divided into brigades, those into standards, and those, in turn, into stormtroopers. To increase the efficiency of the SS actions, several motorized assaults were created in their composition. In addition, Himmler, as Reichsführer SS, divided his headquarters into five departments, each of which dealt with its own field of activity. However, the contradictions between the SA and the SS

it turned out

elimination is not easy. If the attack aircraft went from the lower and middle classes, then the SS tried to recruit "the best people." In addition, the SS never observed a moratorium on agitation among the stormtroopers. Ryoma received numerous complaints about the fact that the representatives of the SS were luring many members of the SA to their side. The rivalry between the two paramilitary organizations was spurred on by the fact that the SS, as a more disciplined structure, enjoyed virtually unlimited confidence on the part of the political leadership of the NSDAP.

In June 1931, Heinrich Himmler held a meeting in Munich with the commanders of SS units, at which he read a report "On the goals and objectives of the SS, on the attitude of the SS to the SA and political structures." In fact, this is the only document of the "epoch of struggle" that has come down to our time, in which it was extremely clear and precise about the future goals and tasks of the "security detachments". Himmler believed that the SS were the "guard" destined to become "the last reserve of the Fuhrer." "The SS must be formations that include the best human material available in Germany. The SS must unite by blood unity, and therefore their disintegration is impossible. And further: "We are on a path that allows us to become something more than a group of activists, more disciplined than they are. Only then can it be asserted that we can compete with the best people in the party, that we rightfully bear a "dead head", that only we can claim the title of guard. Expanding his thought, Himmler assumed that in this case the SS would be able to oust the union of front-line soldiers "Steel

helmet", since only the SS will be the only organization of the best veterans of the war.

Speaking of distant political prospects, Himmler focused the attention of those present on the final confrontation between the "Nordic race" and Bolshevism. "Will we be able to once again educate the people, the people of the Nordic race, based on the values of blood, which will be exalted in the selection process? Will we be able to populate Germany with the Nordic race, making the Germans peasants again, and the 200 million people - peasants? If yes, then the land will belong to us! If not, then this means the victory of Bolshevism, the eradication of the Nordic race, the devastation and desolation of the earth. In these processes, the SS had to play the role of a vanguard: "We have been given the greatest and noblest task that can be put before the people at all. We are doomed to create a people based on the ideals of blood. We are called to lay the foundation upon which generations of future Germans will shape their own history. If we properly lay this foundation, then this story will be great. The best fighters, all the best Germans, should voluntarily come to us, who at one moment will discover that the SS is formed correctly, that the SS is really magnificent.

It is impossible not to pay attention to the fact that in his speech, Heinrich Himmler relied on some kind of final clash between Bolshevism and the "Nordic race", and the SS could complete their mission only in the distant future. In this case, the key to the formation of the elite organization of the party was to be "racial selection". On the basis of this alone, Himmler demanded that a photograph be attached to the application for joining the SS. The reason for this demand was Himmler's desire that the SS formations not have

"Slavic appearance". OH made especially strict requirements for potential SS leaders - under no circumstances should they have Slavic or Asian features. In addition, before transferring an ordinary SS man to a leading position, it was necessary to carefully check his family. "A good and completely irreproachable leader cannot come from a bad environment, otherwise he will not have the power to make a decision, and each of the leaders of the SS should have this power." Only after this did Himmler begin to discuss the role of the SS within the National Socialist movement as a whole. "In dealing with the SA, we have to be best buddies, but at the same time be a role model. We must act, not talk. We should be guided by the old adage: more action, less words." Fundamental for the SS was to be unconditional obedience to the party leadership. "We should not count on universal popularity, after the work done, we may not be liked, but we should not demand any tokens of appreciation in return. However, our Führer must know that the SS is always at his disposal. We should be for him the most devoted and most valuable organization, and therefore we have no right to disappoint him.

Around the same time, Heinrich Himmler drew up an "Approximate Service Manual for the Activities of the SS", which detailed the duties of the SS. For example, members of the SS were required to meet together at least four times a month. The reason for the meetings could be propaganda and agitation events. In addition, two more days a month

SS men were supposed to dedicate their own "service in the SS." At this time, they had to engage in physical training. As such, Himmler recommended judo, which he tried to practice during his student years. Himmler emphasized again and again that the SS

should have been an elite organization. It was for this reason that the SS did not have the right to engage in "petty disputes" among themselves. He again pointed out that SS employees were forbidden to participate in the discussions that took place at general party meetings. In addition, Himmler ordered to refrain from interfering in the affairs of the SA.

In addition, the draft service regulations stipulated what songs all SS employees were to know and what their uniforms were to look like (brown shirt, black tie, black cap with a "dead head", black trousers, black boots and black belt). Under pain of exclusion from the ranks of the SS, it was forbidden to carry weapons with you - at that time, the NSDAP emphasized its "legality" in every possible way and did not want to give reasons for the ban on activities, which could be carried out on the basis of decrees adopted by the Reich President. Very strict requirements were imposed on candidates for joining the SS - they had to be at least 170 centimeters tall, not younger than 23 years old, and have a strong physical build. After the adoption of the service charter, it was supplemented by numerous orders, orders and directives that determined the "internal order" of service in the SS. In particular, it was about the organization of the headquarters of the SS, the formation of musical units, the medical examination of the SS.

In the summer of 1931, Heinrich Himmler made a decision that determined the nature of SS service for many years to come. He orders the formation of his own intelligence service. A few months before that, he met Reinhard Heydrich, who was forced to leave his service in the navy. Heydrich and Himmler were introduced by SS Gruppenführer Baron Karl Friedrich von Eberstein. At first, Heydrich was introduced to the SS,

based in Hamburg. He soon found himself surrounded by Himmler. From the very beginning it was clear that Heydrich, having received the specialization of a "communications officer" in the navy, he was supposed to be engaged not in the transmission of messages, but in espionage. | On August 1931, Heydrich took up his duties as head of the new SS service, which was then named in a military manner - department 1s. To facilitate the activities of Heydrich, in September 1931, Himmler issued a secret order in which he ordered the creation of a network of informants. It was supposed to belittle the entire structure of the SS down to individual standards. However, at first there was only one person in the new department - Heydrich himself. The situation changed somewhat after the government of the Weimar Republic banned the activities of the SS and SA in April 1932. To disguise the work of the SS intelligence, it was renamed the "information press service." After that, Heydrich managed to acquire many employees throughout Germany. They regularly sent their messages to the "centre". When on July 19, 1932, the activities of the SA and SS were again allowed, the "press service" was turned into the security service of the SS (SD). Ten days later, Heydrich, who was its leader, received the title of SS Standartenführer.

If we return to 1930, we can note that after the success in the elections to the Reichstag, the number of the National Socialist Party began to grow rapidly. The NSDAP expected a breakthrough in local elections and elections to the Landtag. At the same time, the ranks of the SA also expanded. In 1931 alone, the number of assault detachments increased from 88,000 to 260,000 people.

Despite the fact that the number of SS also increased, they could not boast of such a rapid increase. On January 1, 1931, there were 2,727 people in the SS, | April -4490,

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In October 1931, Himmler stated that the number of SS exceeded 10 thousand people, to which it was necessary to add another 3 thousand people who wanted to join the SS. To that

At the moment, the SS were divided into 39 standards, which were distributed among 8 SS abschnitts (a territorial division unit that replaced the SS Oberführer's area).

In his speech to the leaders of the SS in June 1931, Heinrich Himmler stressed that his organization should be not just an elite formation of the party, but "the racial vanguard of the German people". Now, for admission to the SS, all candidates underwent a strict "racial examination". At first, the Reichsführer personally studied the photographs of candidates for entry into the SS. This was Himmler's hallmark. In many cases, he preferred to study the issue on his own, not daring to delegate authority to his subordinates. However, by 1933, the influx of applicants to join the SS became so huge that for some time everyone was accepted indiscriminately. A valid "racial examination" was carried out only in cases where a person claimed one of the leading roles in the SS, that is, planned to become an "officer" (at that time, "SS officer" was not yet an official wording). The criteria for racial selection were tightened once again when Himmler signed the order "On engagement and marriage." Now even the future wives of SS leaders were subject to "racial examination". From that moment on, SS employees required special permission to marry. To facilitate this work, Himmler ordered the formation of a racial administration of the SS, which was headed by his friend in the Artam alliance, Richard Walter Darre. He was also charged with maintaining a special "generic book of the SS." It is impossible to deny the fact that the order "On engagement and marriage" immediately ran into mass

misunderstanding on the part of the SS employees, and Himmler himself looked almost ridiculous. However, he was able to reverse the situation. In fact, the "marriage order" was just an integral part of the policy, through which Heinrich Himmler intended to finally dissociate himself from the "plebeian" SA. If the SS were to become the racial and political elite, then they had to be the exact opposite of the storm troopers, known throughout Germany for their drinking and promiscuity. In the SS, it was planned to cultivate "Nordic" character traits, that is, strictness, restraint, etc.

If we talk about the first leaders of the SS, then in the period 1930-1932, as a rule, they included people who were born between 1890 and 1900. This was a generation of military youth, and a significant part of the leaders of the SS were young front-line soldiers. In most cases, they went to the front as volunteers, then continued their combat mission as part of the Freikorps. They could not fit into peaceful ("civilian") life, in which they were perceived as marginalized. The list of these people is well known: Karl Wolff (born 1900), August Heismeier (1897), Kurt Wege (1891), Richard Hildebrandt (1897), Fritz Weitzel (1904), Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger (1894), Friedrich Jeckeln (1895), Sepp Dietrich (1892), Werner Lorenz (1891), Kurt Wittier (1894), Kurt Daluge (1897), Alfred Rodenbücher (1900), Wilhelm Radisz (1900). It is immediately evident that Himmler preferred to put at the head of the SS people whom he could call his peers.

At the end of 1931, Himmler had to bring the territorial division of the SS into line with the structure of the SA. All SS Abschnitts were subordinated to two group commands: "South Germany" and "North Germany". As their

leaders were Fritz Weitzel and Sepp Dietrich. During 1932, the groups "East", "South-East", "West" appeared, which were later transformed into SS Oberabschnitts. At the grassroots level, the number of new formations grew almost constantly. In January 1932, Himmler gave the order to form under the SS its own "flight assaults", which were to be independent of the National Socialist flying corps. With this step, the Reichsführer SS wanted to attract into his organization enthusiasts of air sports and gliding, which at that time were very popular in Germany. When the NSDAP paramilitaries were banned in April 1931, there were 25,000 people in the SS. Some time later, the activities of the SS were again allowed, then they already numbered 41,000 people. Now the SS managed to achieve the coefficient proposed by Ryom - the SS must

were 10% of the total number of attack aircraft. In those days, the SS was half funded by membership dues and donations from so-called contributing members.

Meanwhile, Himmler decides to clean up the organization of the Munich SS center. On July 15, 1932, he orders the creation of an SS management department, headed by the former sales agent Gerhard Schneider. In October 1932, he dissolved the Imperial Finance Office, which had existed since 1930. His boss, Paul Magnus Weikert, is not only deprived of his post, but also expelled from the SS. In this case, the reason lay most likely not in the organizational transformations of the SS structure, but in the suspicion that Weikert was engaged in financial fraud. Himmler always showed an unhealthy scrupulousness regarding money. Fraud and embezzlement of public funds was almost a "mortal sin" for him. It was for this reason that he demanded a detailed account of all

money. After the war, employees of the project "Source of Life" ("Lebensborn"), which was launched in 1935 as part of the implementation of Himmler's ideas to form the "ideal Nordic German", recalled that the Reichsführer SS demanded that almost every gram of margarine that was received be accounted for in the houses of the "Source of Life". In any case, after the resignation of Weikert, the management department began to develop, eventually becoming an important component of the structure of the SS. However, in 1934, Schneider suffered the fate of Weikert, he was deprived of his post due to suspicions of theft and concealment of money. And these cases were by no means single.

Meanwhile, Himmler was puzzled by the fact that he had to bring to some common denominator the rapidly growing leadership corps of the SS. For this reason, from January 31 to February 20, 1932, the so-called "Reichsführer-SS training courses" were held in Munich. During these courses, Himmler first appeared before his subordinates in a black uniform. He wanted to emphasize that the SS had to distance themselves from the brown shirts that "befitted" the stormtroopers. As might be expected, the content of the training courses was not particularly original. The leaders of the SS were told about the world revolution, Jewry, Freemasonry, racial problems, and Christianity. Many years later, Karl Wolff described the events of those days as follows: "Many then had never encountered the Reichsfuehrer SS face to face. The essence of this event was to establish a live connection so that everyone could be convinced of the strength of his personality. However, after the war, Wolf chose to change the tone of his memoirs: "Pale, with glasses, Himmler's appearance at first disappointed everyone. He did not have typical military and courageous features that could inspire the confidence of listeners ... When we talked with him after reading the reports, behind the cold gleam of round glasses we could see warm

and cheerful eyes. However, Karl Wolff changed the description of Himmler more than once. Depending on the situation (for example, during interrogations by the allies), he could characterize him as "cold", "authoritarian coy", "unreliable", and his "friendliness" was just "an attempt to hide these unseemly qualities of character." However, many of his contemporaries recall that Himmler was indeed somewhat squeamish and biased in dealing with others.
people.

Considering that Heinrich Himmler did not look like a typical soldier, it becomes clear why he wanted to compensate for this impression by wearing a black uniform. A young man continued to live in it, who was worried about the fact that he never became an officer. And this was expressed in emphatically "soldier" manners. In the spring of 1929, Albert Krebs, one of the Hamburg National Socialists, spent more than six hours on a train trip with Heinrich Himmler. Krebs recalled that Himmler impressed him as a man who tried to compensate for some external shortcomings with his behavior. "He behaved emphatically brave, literally boasted of the Landsknecht's manners and his contempt for bourgeois morality, although, probably, he wanted to hide his own weakness and clumsiness through this." Krebs emphasized that Himmler's "stupid and pointless chatter" was simply unbearable for him, which he conducted for almost all six hours. The speeches of the Reichsfuehrer SS were "a strange mixture of militant boasting, petty-bourgeois rantings

and the zealous fanaticism of a sectarian preacher. As you can see, Himmler did not get rid of his youthful habits over time. As in his student days, he continued to position himself as an exceptional person, which annoyed those around him a lot.

Meanwhile, 1932 came. The NSDAP in the elections to the Reichstag expected another success. However, despite this, the National Socialists did not enter the government cabinet. After the activities of the SA and SS were re-legalized, the country was literally swept by a wave of unrest. The National Socialists expected them to seize power literally any day. In East Germany, these actions turned into uniform terror. The reason for this lay in the fact that many stormtroopers no longer believed in Hitler's "legal course". And they had their own reasons for this - the NSDAP was one of the strongest parties, which actually won during the elections to the Reichstag, but it never came to power. Under these conditions, putschist sentiments, characteristic of the National Socialist movement of the early 1920s, began to revive. The bloodiest events took place in Königsberg, where several people were killed, including a member of the city council from the Communist Party. Several prominent opponents of the NSDAP were assassinated. Gradually, a wave of terror spread throughout East Prussia, and then spread to Silesia. There is irrefutable evidence that Heinrich Himmler was involved in these actions. At least he instructed the SS commander in East Prussia, Waldemar Wappenhaus, accordingly. This SS man, after the National Socialists came to power, actually remained out of work. It was for this reason that he sent a letter to Himmler in 1938, in which he recalled his "past merits." In particular, he reported: "I, as the head of the East Prussia standard, in 1932, on your orders, participated in the persecution of the leaders of the communists, which as a result led to my arrest." After coming to power, the National Socialists liked to talk about the "war time", about the "era of struggle", but still preferred not to talk about the details that were associated with terror. They didn't want to give the impression of a political

forces that were ready to start a civil war in Germany. Heinrich Himmler even preferred to remain silent about his involvement in armed actions. Although, as they saw, it was some kind of moral problem for him to participate in illegal operations associated with violence. In the 1920s, he was a member of many paramilitary organizations that focused on the armed seizure of power. In 1922, he approved of the assassination of Rathenau, about which he clearly knew more than he let on. In 1923 he took part in the "beer putsch". For a while, he viewed the political struggle as just a continuation of the world war, and even prepared for a civil war.

In August 1932, law enforcement forces managed to take control of the situation in East Germany. At about the same time, a meeting between Hindenburg and Hitler was to take place. The NSDAP hoped that the Führer would be offered the post of Reich Chancellor. Nevertheless, Hitler was merely invited to cooperate with the new government. From that moment on, the political organization came under the strongest pressure from the stormtroopers. They made numerous sacrifices, as they were promised coming to power. However, as it seemed, the National Socialists did not succeed in coming to power "legally". When the Reichstag was once again dissolved, the NSDAP could hardly start a new election campaign. People were tired of endless marches, and funds were running out. Disappointment affected not only the attack aircraft, but also the SS. If just a few months ago the ranks of the SS were growing rapidly, by the autumn of 1932 this process had almost stopped. In September 1932, numerous messages began to come to Himmler, in which discontent was brewing among the SS men. From Braunschweig they signaled: "The dissolution of the Reichstag and the delay in the seizure of power connected with it caused a certain depression ...

However, faith in our victory remains. The spirit is revolutionary, faith in the National Socialist program is unshakable." The commander of the Vostok group wrote: "The mood of my people is good, there is no room for any manifestations of depression." Considering that often the true state of affairs was written between the lines, in this case it is necessary to pay attention to the following passage: "Only a few of the people are worried about financial difficulties, but their depression is caused solely by financial problems." IN

a message from the group "South" (originally "South Germany") sounded more honest words: "The failed seizure of power caused a certain ferment." From the "South-East" group (Silesia) they reported on the good condition of the SS, but again with reservations: "The unstable political situation leads to discord."

The discontent that was brewing in the SS led to the fact that relations between the SS men and the stormtroopers deteriorated completely. In December 1932, Ernst Röhm, in a secret report, which was also addressed to Heinrich Himmler, reported that the conflict between the two structures began to take on "fearing forms." It was supposed to hold a joint meeting, in which both the leadership of the SS and the leadership of the SA were to take part. It was scheduled for January 10, 1933. However, by this time the situation began to change. In the next elections to the Reichstag, the NSDAP received 33.1% of the vote. In addition, many votes were given to right-wing and conservative parties. The National Socialists could believe that they had achieved another victory. But this time, too, Hitler did not become chancellor. They appointed von Schleicher, who considered it possible to rely on both the nationalists and the moderate left at the same time. Moreover, he planned to break away from Hitler the "left wing", represented by Gregor Strasser, in order to form a government cabinet that would have

represented: the Reichswehr, the trade unions and the National Socialist Left. After such an offer, Gregor Strasser was forced to leave all posts in the party, as Hitler accused him of "treason." Despite the fact that Gregor Strasser was perceived in Hitler's circle as a "sectarian" and "traitor", Heinrich Himmler did not stop communicating with his former patron. So, for example, in April 1933, he asked Strasser, who began to earn a living in real estate, to sell a plot of land in Waldtrudering.

Meanwhile, behind-the-scenes negotiations were going on, which eventually led Hitler to the post of Chancellor of Germany. Himmler took part in them. So, for example, on January 10, 1933, Himmler, accompanied by the well-known businessman Wilhelm Kepler, appeared at Joachim von Ribbentrop (then still a businessman) with a request to help organize a meeting between Hitler and von Papen, who some time ago lost the post of Reich Chancellor. This meeting took place on 18 January 1933 at Ribbentrop's country house. In addition to Hitler and von Papen, Ernst Röhm and Heinrich Himmler also attended. After all these behind-the-scenes games, Hitler was appointed head of the coalition government, which included the National Socialists and right-wing conservatives. It happened on January 30, 1933.

Chapter 12 Towards Controlled Terror

It took the National Socialists very little time for the coalition government that came to power on January 30, 1933, to become one-party. Literally in six months, the National Socialists were able to gain control over the state apparatus, to declare invalid

Weimar constitution, take key positions BO in all spheres of public life. The "seizure of power", as the NSDAP liked to call these processes, was accompanied by pseudo-revolutionary actions directed from above, the purpose of which was to hide the terror that had begun from the public. In the first months of being in power, the National Socialists had not yet created a well-functioning apparatus of violence, and therefore terror was largely sporadic and uncontrollable.

In order to retain political power and facilitate the implementation of terror against ideological opponents, the National Socialists had to carry out several fundamental measures. First, it was necessary to gain complete control over the police apparatus. Secondly, to remove the political police from the general police subordination and make it under the control of the new government exclusively. Thirdly, give the SA and SS the functions of auxiliary police units. In addition, it was supposed to use the arrest of "suspects" as an indefinite measure of restraint, which did not require judicial permission, which in turn required the creation of extensive camps in which these "suspects" were to be kept. However, the unification of terror was hampered by the fact that in almost all the lands of the SA, SS and

The political apparatus of the NSDAP fought among themselves in the hope of taking more advantageous positions. For this reason, in various German states, the problem of terror and the methods of its implementation could be different. If you look at Prussia, the largest of the German states, the leadership of it was entrusted to Hermann Goering, who at that moment was the second person in the party, "Nazi No. 2". He temporarily headed the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, subjugated the police, after which he began to create the secret state police (Gestapo) exclusively as an independent organization,

designed to persecute political opponents of the NSDAP. As expected, on February 22, 1933, Goering made the SA and SS auxiliary police units. Both of these structures decided to use the acquired rights independently of each other. They made arrests at their own discretion.

Meanwhile, Heinrich Himmler was in Bavaria, which was considered (not only in terms of territory) the second land of Germany. On March 9, Reich Minister of the Interior Frick appointed Lieutenant General Franz Ritter von Epp as Reichskommissar for Bavaria (that is, in fact, dictator). Franz von Epp at one time was the creator of one of the most famous volunteer corps, and then became one of the most eminent National Socialists. Since the NSDAP did not yet have full control over the country, in order to carry out this appointment, a convenient excuse had to be found. It was Frick's statement that the allegedly conservative Bavarian government of Heinrich Heines was not able to control the situation in his land. In confirmation of this, the Bavarian SA and SS took to the streets, which naturally caused riots, including Jewish pogroms. That same evening, von Epp appointed local Gauleiter Adolf Wagner as Bavarian Minister of the Interior and Heinrich Himmler as Acting Chief of the Munich Police. Heydrich was instructed to stand at the head of the 4th department of the police presidium, that is, at the head of the political police, which at one time had to oppose radical organizations, including the NSDAP.

On March 12, Heinrich Himmler, in his capacity as Acting Police Chief of Munich, gave a press conference in which he commented on the mass arrests that had taken place over the course of three days. He stated: "I

I believe that the arrest of a suspect is an emergency measure, but we were forced to use it, because there were riots in the city. In this way, we ensure the safety of the individuals who caused these riots. This is the only way we can save their life and health. I would like to specifically note that for us, citizens of the Jewish faith are the same citizens as everyone else. We don't make any distinction." However, Himmler was "comfortable" only in words. It cannot be denied that there were no mass arrests of Jews in those days. However, in just a few days, all the prominent figures of the Communist Party, the Iron Front (a paramilitary organization of the Social Democrats) and the Reichsbanner (Black-Red-Gold Banner - a paramilitary organization of Republican Democrats) were behind bars.

A week after his appointment, Heinrich Himmler received another post - Adolf Wagner made him a "political assistant" in the Bavarian Ministry of the Interior. So Himmler actually gained control of the entire Bavarian political police. It was after this that Himmler, already as Reichsführer SS, gained the opportunity to appoint members of the SS as auxiliary employees of the Bavarian political police. Initially, there were 1020 such people. When, on April 1, Himmler was appointed to the post of political commander of the police of Bavaria, then he had at his disposal the political police, the auxiliary political police and the concentration camps created on the territory of Bavaria. Ten days later, Himmler "ceded" the post of Munich police chief to SA Obergruppenführer August Schneiderhuber - now it was he who had to take responsibility for all the arrests of "suspects".

The result of this series of appointments and transfers was that Heinrich Himmler was able to concentrate considerable power in his hands in the shortest possible time. He not only led

police, but he could organize its activities in his own way, for which he preferred to involve his SS subordinates. However, most of all he liked the position of political commander of the Bavaria police, which allowed him to resist the "special commissioners" who were appointed by Ernst Röhm from the ranks of the SA. In this case, they tried to use stormtroopers as auxiliary police, which, of course, did not suit Himmler.

In Bavaria, the political police began to create special camps for holding arrested "suspects" as early as March 13, 1933. As a base for one of these camps, the territory of a former factory was chosen, which was located near Munich in the town of Dachau. Himmler announced the creation of a concentration camp here publicly on March 20, 1933. He urged the townsfolk not to be tormented by "petty doubts" regarding the placement of 5,000 detainees. At first, the Dachau camp was guarded by parts of the Munich law enforcement service, but Himmler, who received new powers, transferred the protection to the SS formations. It would seem that this step was nothing special, but for the SS and Himmler it meant a lot. The fact is that now the SS employees were put on state allowance and were engaged in official state activities. When the police left Dachau, there were about 200 prisoners there. The SS men who arrived decided to arrange another terrorist attack. Four Jews died. The case could not be hushed up (the regime was still weak), and therefore the investigation began. It turned out that the victims were either beaten to death or shot dead. The investigation found out that the commandant of the camp, Hilmar Weckerle, organized his own

own court, which could even pass a death sentence. The case received wide publicity, and therefore even the prosecutor's office had to intervene. Despite the fact that the perpetrators were not punished in any way, Himmler promised von Epp that he would replace Weckerle as commandant.

The replacement was Theodor Eicke, who would later be appointed inspector of all concentration camps and commander of the SS "Totenkopf" formations, who would be entrusted with guarding these camps. During the Weimar Republic, Eicke repeatedly tried to get a job in the police. In 1928 he joined the NSDAP, in 1930 he was entrusted with the creation of an SS unit in Ludwigshafen. In 1932 a strange story happened. Eicke was arrested on charges of planning an assassination attempt using explosives. At the trial, Eicke stated that this was a provocation on the part of the Gauleiter of the Palatinate, with whom he had been in a long conflict. By the way, such a possibility cannot be ruled out. In any case, Eicke was sentenced to two years in prison. During his stay in the prison infirmary, Eicke escaped, after which he hid in Italy, which was done on the orders of Himmler. While on the run, Eicke repeatedly met with the Reichsführer SS and he assured him of support. And these were by no means empty words. At the first opportunity, Himmler promoted the fugitive terrorist to SS Oberführer.

In February 1933, Eicke returned to Germany at his own risk. Considering that the National Socialists were in power, it is not surprising that he was granted amnesty retroactively.

However, Eicke was unable to enjoy a quiet life. Once in Ludwigshafen, he found himself embroiled in yet another

political scandal. Himmler summoned Eicke to Munich and severely reprimanded him. After that, Eicke promised that, as head of the SS, he would not interfere in political discussions. However, he did not keep his word. On March 21, 1933, he was again arrested. The reason for the arrest was the unauthorized actions of the SS men subordinate to him, which ended in a clash with the police. In prison, Eicke went on a hunger strike, after which he was transferred to a psychiatric clinic in Würzburg. At first, Himmler wanted to expel him from the SS, but Eicke wrote a huge exculpatory note. In addition, psychiatrist Werner Heide assured the Reichsführer SS that his ward was by no means mentally ill (in a few years they would meet again and Heide would be involved in the euthanasia program). After that, Himmler secured his release.

Eicke, intending to use it "for some special occasions". The Dachau camp turned out to be such a case.

Eicke was well aware that he owed almost everything to the Reichsfuehrer SS, and therefore tried not to "disappoint" Himmler anymore. This time he showed zeal, creating a camp that was fundamentally different from the concentration camps that arose in the first months of the National Socialists in power. The distinctive features of the new camp model were complete isolation from the outside world, the almost complete absence of the ability to escape from it, the separation of guards and commandant's office, special clothing for prisoners, a system of punishments, etc. That is, Eicke created what is now meant by the phrase "concentration camp during the period of the National Socialist dictatorship. In addition, Eicke decided to restore order among the camp guards. No one had the right to kill prisoners at their own discretion; this could be done if only the prisoner ran outside the camp fence. However, the prisoner could be executed on quite "official grounds" if he was convicted of

incitement to rebellion. Since "incitement" could mean political conversations, refusal to work, an attack on a guard, etc., then, in fact, any prisoner could be executed if the commandant wanted it.

Unlike his predecessor, Theodor Eicke did not tie the death of prisoners to any formal processes. He had no intention of stopping the killings at Dachau. However, fatal incidents were easier to conceal due to the fact that the camp was effectively cut off from the outside world. In most cases, the killing of prisoners was presented as either suicide or death while trying to escape. In this situation, Heinrich Himmler personally had to be involved in the matter, as the political commander of the police - it was he who had to contribute to these falsifications.

Himmler at that time was charged with informing the Bavarian Minister of the Interior of all cases of "suicide" and "attempts to escape." In front of the public and the official bodies of Bavaria, Himmler played a uniform performance when he spoke of a "camp of exemplary content." And they tried to maintain this "positive" image with all their might. So, for example, several commissions visited Dachau with checks. Ernst Röhm was there in August 1933, and in January 1934 a delegation of Reichsleiters and Gauleiters visited him. In March 1934, the Bavarian Prime Minister Siebert turned up at Dachau with a check, who was so pleased with the visit that he even wrote a letter to Heinrich Himmler congratulating the Reichsfuehrer SS on having managed to create a "model prison camp." Some time later, the text of this letter was reproduced by the German press. However, this did not mean that complete calm reigned around Dachau. There were rumors about the facts in Munich

the mysterious death of prisoners who could not help but reach the civil authorities.

This led to the fact that in December 1933 the topic of the death of prisoners in the Dachau camp was again raised at a meeting of the Bavarian Council of Ministers. The imperial governor von Epp resolutely demanded from the representatives of justice that they take up the clarification of the circumstances of these "strange incidents." Under these conditions, Himmler had to seek help from Ernst Röhm, who had connections in the Bavarian Ministry of Justice. Himmler preferred to drag out the investigation, which ended up being a highly successful tactic. In the summer of 1934, a new prosecutor appeared in Bavaria, who chose not to continue the investigation. The Dachau camp turned out to be unreachable for the justice authorities. As you can see, it took Himmler only one year to create in Bavaria a political police controlled only by him. After that, he decided to apply his experience in other German lands. However, he did not yet have enough strength to influence Prussia, where the political police were subordinate to the then powerful Hermann Goering.

By expanding the scope of his activities outside of Bavaria, Himmler proved himself to be a skilled politician who could resort to both diplomacy and violence. He preferred to use infiltration tactics. On the one hand, he tried to bet on

key SS positions, on the other hand, he could persuade many prominent figures who were already in positions to join the SS. Himmler managed to make the "necessary" impression on the regional party leaders. In many cases, it was not he who sought their support, but, on the contrary, the regional representatives of the NSDAP sought the protection and patronage of Heinrich Himmler.

There could be many reasons for this, but first of all it is necessary to pay attention to the political situation that prevailed in Germany in the winter of 1933/34. By this time, Hitler had proclaimed the end of the "national revolution", which significantly limited the arbitrariness of undisciplined assault troops. After that, ideas about the "second revolution" began to be expressed in the ranks of the SA, which forced many party functionaries who were afraid of stormtroopers to look for new allies. In most cases, the choice fell on the SS, which was perceived as an elite party organization. In addition, the middle leadership of the National Socialist Party could not help but pay attention to the "Bavarian model", which very clearly demonstrated the "successes" of the SS in the fight against the opponents of National Socialism. The matter was completed by the realization that the SS were an all-imperial organization, which even had its own intelligence - the SD. The SD very actively created a network of informers, which involved party functionaries from the NSDAP. After Himmler managed to overcome the "Bavarian crisis" that occurred in the summer of 1933, he began to be appointed chief of the political police in various German states, which made it easier for him to form a unified information collection service.

This time, circumstances were on the side of Heinrich Himmler. At the beginning of 1933, the SS had very few paramilitaries that were in the barracks. The situation began to change in March 1933, when a special "staff watch" was formed, the command of which was entrusted to Sepp Dietrich. Some time later, 120 people from the SA and SS were removed from the subordination of the Prussian police, becoming the basis of the "special team Berlin". Her training was entrusted to army officers. Gradually, the number of "special team Berlin" increased to 800 people. They

became a small army that was solely subordinate to Hitler. The special status of this formation was emphasized in September 1933 at the next party congress in Nuremberg, when the team was renamed the Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler. Despite the fact that Sepp Dietrich constantly pointed out that the Leibstandarte was a formation independent of the Reichsführer SS, in fact, as well as from the leadership of the SS as a whole, it cannot be denied that his appearance strengthened the position of the SS and helped the Reichsfuehrer SS in the struggle for power .

In the spring of 1934, when another complication of relations with the assault detachments was brewing, Himmler managed to once again expand his political influence. By this time, he was able in several cities (Munich, Ellwangen, Arolsen, Hamburg, Wolterdingen) to create armed groups based on the SS, which were called "political battalions" or "political duty units". The first of the cities whose leadership offered Heinrich Himmler to head their political police was the "free Hanseatic city" of Hamburg. The circumstances of this proposal allow us to study in detail the tactics that Heinrich Himmler followed at that time. Hamburg was one of the few German cities where the National Socialists, after coming to power, failed to create a unified apparatus of terror. The new rulers preferred not so much to persecute the opponents of National Socialism as they waged a fierce struggle among themselves in the hope of occupying more profitable posts. As a result, the leadership of the political police, which in Hamburg, as in many cities and states, was withdrawn from the general police apparatus, changed several times. In addition, the so-called special forces team was subordinated to the chief of the Hamburg police, which was reinforced by attack aircraft from the auxiliary police units. This

team on your own

carried out arrests and raids. In many cases, these actions ended in massacres without trial or investigation. The situation was complicated by the fact that the "political criminals" were kept in two different camps, one of which was subordinate to the justice authorities, and the other to the leadership

regular police. It should be added that under these conditions, the activities of the Hamburg SD were completely paralyzed by a protracted conflict with Gauleiter Karl Kaufmann.

At the same time, Himmler had a very good relationship with Kaufmann. Both had known each other since 1927 and had crossed paths more than once at party events. In 1933, Himmler visited Hamburg several times to strengthen his position in this northern city. To this end, he supported the appointment of Karl Krogmann as mayor of Hamburg. When Senator Hans Niland was appointed acting chief of the city police, Himmler immediately offered him a high SS rank. After that, Himmler more than once supported Wilhelm Bolz, the head of the Hamburg "naval" SA, which, against the background of all the assault detachments, were considered almost an elite formation that shunned the "proletarian" brownshirts.

In October 1933, another reshuffle took place in Hamburg. This time, it was decided to appoint Bruno Streckenbach, who was not only well acquainted with Himmler, but also an SS officer, as head of the political police. At the same time, Himmler promoted Gauleiter Kaufmann to the rank of SS Oberführer, and to State Secretary Georg Friedrich Ahrens, SS Standartenführer. It is significant that Himmler made almost everyone an SD officer: Ahrens, Streckenbach, etc. Thus, a close relationship arose between the party apparatus and the SD. As a result, the party leadership decided that its authority

HE will not suffer at all if Heinrich Himmler is formally in charge of the political police of Hamburg.

Himmler's new appointment took place on November 23, 1933. It was from this moment that SS officers began to be actively involved in carrying out the tasks assigned to the political police. After that, Streckenbach visited Munich several times, where he studied the "Bavarian model". In Hamburg, he managed to create a similar repressive apparatus. The leadership of the Fülzbütel prison, where political prisoners were kept, was entrusted to the SS. In the summer of 1934, the civil authorities lost their last opportunity to control what was happening in the prison. Through personal contacts, through the presentation of SS ranks to party officials and the placement of SS employees in important posts, Himmler was able to achieve his goal. Even the "wayward" behavior of individual SS employees (for example, the leadership of the SD in Hamburg) he used as a trump card. Himmler tried to emphasize that only he, through his personal intervention, could resolve conflicts, and, if necessary, change the "not the most disciplined" SS leaders.

During these months, which became decisive for Himmler in strengthening his power in Germany as a whole, he was constantly on the road. The reason for this was the formal desire to "know the situation in the country." A few weeks after the political success in Hamburg, Himmler was appointed chief of the political police in Lübeck and Mecklenburg. Here he applied the traditional tactics. He conferred SS titles on the imperial governors. In addition, Ludwig Oldach, who in November 1933 headed the political police of Mecklenburg, was admitted to the SS shortly before. In Württemberg, Himmler managed to convince the imperial governor Wilhelm Murr that parts of the auxiliary police,

consisting of SS employees, had to be turned into "political battalions". Now these formations had weapons and were in the barracks position.

However, the strengthening of Himmler's personal power in this German land did not happen immediately. At first, the Reichsfuehrer SS preferred to act through his acquaintance Walter Stahlecker, who in May 1933 was appointed deputy chief of the political police. However, in November 1933, he was replaced in this post by Hermann Mattheis, who gravitated towards the leadership of the SA. Despite this, Himmler managed to ensure that on December 9, 1933, he was nevertheless appointed chief of the political police of Württemberg. In this case, two factors may have played a role. First, the desire of the imperial governor Murr to make the political police apparatus "more efficient". Secondly, one cannot discount the fact that in the fall of 1933 the leadership of the SD in Stuttgart (oberabschnitt "South-West") was entrusted with

very energetic Werner Best. However, Heinrich Himmler was able to finally consolidate his power in Württemberg only by May 1934, when Hermann Mattheis was removed from office. He was killed some time later during the "Night of the Long Knives". Stahlecker, on the other hand, made a career in the order police, and on September 9, 1934, Murr gained the rank of SS Gruppenführer.

On December 18, 1933, Himmler took command of the Baden political police. Here Hitler had to intervene. It was on his behalf that Rudolf Hess "petitioned" for the appointment of Heinrich Himmler. It is significant that the "petition of the Führer" was considered by the local Gauleiter Robert Wagner and the Baden Minister of the Interior Pflaumer, who by this time were already SS employees.

In Bremen, Himmler had to face some difficulties. Himmler made his first personal contacts with local party leaders in May 1933. However, in October 1933, Himmler became embroiled in a conflict that arose between police chief Theodor Laue and local stormtroopers. Things got to the point that Ernst Röhm was forced to expel Laue from the ranks of the SA. And this is on condition that Laue was considered one of the creators of the assault squads. After that, Laue, willy-nilly, was forced to seek support from Himmler. At that time, the Reichsführer SS already had a loyal ally in the person of the chief of the Bremen secret state police, Erwin Schulz. Schultz had long been an informer for the SS, and before that, for Bremen's secret state police. After the ground for negotiations had been prepared, Himmler met with the imperial governor, Karl Rover, and the burgomaster, Richard Markert. On December 22, 1933, Himmler became head of the Bremen secret police. On January 5, 1934, similar news came from Oldenburg. In addition, Himmler in the winter of 1933/34 managed to subdue the political police of Hesse, Thuringia and Saxony with virtually no problems. In Baunschweig, Lipe and Schaumburg, Himmler had to make some efforts. After some resistance from local party functionaries, he was still able to achieve what he wanted.

Forming a single political police structure for the whole of Germany, Heinrich Himmler gradually began to focus not so much on the pursuit of the "enemies of New Germany", but on a possible confrontation with the assault squads. In order to facilitate the opposition of the SA and the political police, which for the most part were staffed by SS employees, at the beginning of 1934 Himmler created a special "central bureau" in Munich. Himmler's tactics played a role in the fact that he did not say a word about a possible

limiting the power of local "party princelings". On the contrary, he promised them his support. However, one should not forget that in the winter of 1933/34, Himmler could not fully control the situation even in Bavaria, there was no need to talk about other German lands. However, the Reichsführer SS was already hatching plans according to which he was to subjugate the entire German police and the entire repressive apparatus of the Third Reich. What helped Himmler to disguise his true intentions was his habit of "self-control", which gradually turned into secrecy.

Chapter 13

Himmler's desire to create a single political police for the entire Third Reich would have been unrealistic if he had not taken control of political terror in the largest and most significant of the German states, namely in Prussia. Only in this case, he could count on the creation of a unified repressive apparatus, which would have centralized control. Meanwhile, in Prussia itself, there was an unceasing struggle for an hour between various groups. In those days, it was very clear to many that the management of the political police was the most important factor in determining the internal politics of Germany. There is no need to talk about all the intricacies of the "struggle of competencies" that took place in Prussia in 1933-1934. Within the framework of this book, it makes sense to dwell on only a few points. It is important to understand what eventually allowed Heinrich Himmler to still become the head of the Prussian secret state police (Gestapo). There is no doubt that Hermann was the central figure in the struggle for power in Prussia.

Goering. Initially, he was appointed Commissar of the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, and from April 1933 he was Prime Minister of Prussia.

Hermann Goering preferred to act not through the police department of the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, but through the "Commissar for Special Assignments" at the Ministry of the Interior, who was appointed head of the SS group "East" Kurt Dalyuge. It was Dalyuge who helped in his time to cope with the rebellious attack aircraft of Walter Shtennes. Despite the fact that formally Dalyuge did not have too much authority, Hermann Goering relied on him as one of the most "promising" employees of the Prussian police apparatus. By and large, Dalyuge was independent of the Munich SS leadership. Despite the fact that Kurt Dalyuge had a high SS rank, he should by no means be regarded as Himmler's Trojan horse. When Dalyuge began his fast-paced career in Berlin, he was first and foremost a man of Hermann Göring. This explains the fact that in May 1933 he was appointed head of the police department in the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, and in September 1933 he became the commander of the Prussian police.

To facilitate the fight against political opponents, Goering formed his own repressive apparatus. He removed the political police from the general police apparatus and created a secret state police department. The leadership of the new police department was entrusted to Rudolf Diels, who from 1931 was in charge of the fight against communism in the Prussian Ministry of the Interior. It is significant that, despite the change in the form of state government, Diels's department was, as it were, the recipient of the traditions of the Weimar Republic, and therefore he began to recruit employees into the new special police, whom he had known since republican times. It was on the basis of the secret state police department that the secret state police was later formed.

the police are the Gestapo.

However, even in Prussia, representatives of the National Socialist Party found themselves in police posts, who tried to oppose the centralization carried out by Goering. This made it much easier for Himmler to infiltrate the Prussian police apparatus. First of all, the Reichsfuehrer could count on the auxiliary police created on February 22, 1933 by Goering. By March 1933, its number in Prussia amounted to several tens of thousands of people. At that time, attack aircraft prevailed in it (25 thousand people). At the same time, the Prussian Auxiliary Police had 15,000 SS men and 10,000 members of the Steel Helmet. The unconditional dominance of the stormtroopers was considered by the leadership of the party and the SS as a significant problem, since with their unbridled behavior they risked undermining the authority of the NSDAP and the state.

Under these conditions, Goering and Diels were simply forced to rely on the SS, which were longtime competitors of the SA. They felt like they were choosing the lesser of evils. As a result, on April 21, 1933, the Prussian Ministry of Internal Affairs issued an order that prescribed that only SS officers could serve in the auxiliary police units. Stormtroopers, on the other hand, were supposed to be only "assistants" of ordinary policemen. At the same time, it was assumed that there would be a certain cooperation and interpenetration of the political police and SS units. It was they who were supposed to be engaged in the persecution of political opponents of the "new regime", while the attack aircraft were supposed to participate only as a fence during mass events.

In June 1933, the contours of a new conflict were outlined. This was due to the fact that Ernst Röhm was appointed Commissioner of the Prussian Auxiliary Police, and Heinrich Himmler -

Commissioner of the Political Auxiliary Police. After that, Diels informed his boss, Kurt Dalyuge, that in the future it was planned to recruit Gestapo employees only from SS employees. In order to meet these formal prerequisites, almost all employees of the secret state police were declared candidates for entry into the SS. Hermann Goering did not object to such developments. As the commissar of the political auxiliary police attached to the Gestapo, Heinrich Himmler was able to bring into the secret

of the state police department of his man - Untersturmführer Walter Soest. Thanks to this, Heydrich had the opportunity to introduce people from the SD into the Gestapo units.

By the time Adolf Hitler announced the end of the National Socialist Revolution on August 2, 1933, Goering had completely subjugated the entire auxiliary police force. A little later, from the SS men who served in the auxiliary police units, a special Gestapo brigade was formed, headed by SS Brigadeführer Max Henze. Columbia (an improvised prison that terrified the whole of Berlin) and the Gestapo Central, located in Prince Albrecht's Palace, were transferred to its disposal. So Heinrich Himmler received at his disposal a structure of the Gestapo that was absolutely independent in its actions. At the same time, Heinrich Himmler deprived Kurt Daluege, who was the Brigadeführer of the SS, of control over the Vostok group. In fact, this was a weakening of Daluege's position of power, since he lost power over the SS formations in East Germany. That is, Daluege, who was the spokesman for the interests of Hermann Goering, lost any opportunity to control the SS men who were in Berlin.

The consolidation of the SD in Berlin also turned out to be problematic. Immediately after the National Socialists came to power, the center of the SS security service was moved from Munich to the German capital. At that time, Heydrich had no more than fifty employees at his disposal throughout Germany. Before the SD began to expand, it was embroiled in a high-profile scandal. After the events in Hamburg and Braunschweig, some of the party functionaries began to accuse the SD of interfering in internal party problems. After that, Heydrich had to leave Berlin and again move to Munich. In the summer of 1933, while in Bavaria, he began to reorganize the SD. In this case, he could count on the support of Himmler. If earlier Heydrich was just the chief of staff of the SD, then in June 1933 he received an official post in the police.

At the same time, Himmler, in his capacity as Reichsführer SS, was conducting tacit negotiations with Rudolf Hess, during which the possibility of SD interference in party affairs was discussed. By the autumn of 1934, an agreement was reached that the SS security service could interfere in party disputes only with the personal permission of Rudolf Hess. In addition, despite numerous rumors, on November 13, Hitler decided to give the SD special powers. Just a few days before, Himmler turned the SD into an independent government, in connection with which Heydrich received the rank of SS Brigadeführer. The SD, which turned into an SS department, consisted of a headquarters and three departments: German, foreign and "Masonic". Also by the beginning of 1934, Heydrich was to form seven regional oberabschnitts of the SD. On June 9, 1934, Rudolf Hess, as Deputy Führer for the party, announced that the SD was the only intelligence service of the NSDAP.

However, the SD was too preoccupied with its own problems to help Himmler consolidate his position in Prussia. After the Reichsführer SS managed to neutralize the attempts of the most undisciplined part of the SA to take key positions in the police apparatus, in the autumn of 1933 he began to make efforts to transfer the protection of prisoners in the Prussian camps exclusively to the SS structures. However, this initiative failed at first. Since the SS distinguished themselves by torturing prisoners, arbitrariness and even killing prisoners who were kept in the so-called swamp camps near Ems, in November 1933 it was decided to transfer the protection of the camps to the police units of law and order. Strange as it may seem, but even from this failure, Heinrich Himmler was able to benefit, at least in terms of realizing his ambitions in Prussia. He realized that it was impossible to use the repressive apparatus of the SS in conditions of strict state control.

Himmler was even able to benefit from the conflict that arose between Göring and Diels in the autumn of 1933. Things got to the point that Kurt Daluege proclaimed Diels a traitor, and Diels himself was forced to hide in Czechoslovakia. Paul Hinkler, who succeeded him as head of the secret state police department, could hardly cope with the new duties. As a result, Goering had to admit that in the fight against the SA, Diels was

irreplaceable. This was followed by an invitation to return to Germany. Diels accepted the invitation, however, once in Berlin, he preferred to work more closely with Heydrich and the SD. It should not be forgotten that on the eve of returning to Germany, Heinrich Himmler promoted Diels to SS Standartenführer.

Himmler could count on success when the interests of Hermann Goering clashed with those of Wilhelm Frick,

who was the Imperial Minister of the Interior. While Göring was able to create his own police force in Prussia, and Himmler, although not very successfully, nevertheless managed to gain a foothold in the Prussian police apparatus, Wilhelm Frick began to attempt to centralize the police throughout Germany, which, of course, also applied to the political police. In this program, one question remained open: how much individual German states could influence a unified police apparatus. On this occasion Goering and Frick met more than once in the spring and summer of 1933. Wilhelm Frick planned that the Prussian Ministry of the Interior would be merged with the Reich Ministry of the Interior, which meant that Göring would lose control of the political police. To prevent this from happening, Hermann Goering in November 1933 signed the so-called Second Gestapo Law, in which he removed the state secret police from the subordination of the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, subordinating it to himself as the Prussian Prime Minister. Diels, who was head of the secret police, was henceforth referred to as Inspector of the Gestapo. If in April 1933 the Gestapo was withdrawn from the general police apparatus, then in November 1933 the Prussian Ministry of the Interior lost all control over it. The fact that the political police of Prussia was completely out of state control was another incentive for Heinrich Himmler to act. Now he planned to start a collaboration with Göring.

At the end of 1933, it became obvious to many that Himmler finally distanced himself from his formal boss, Ernst Röhm, and began to move closer to Hermann Goering. In early 1934, Himmler began collecting material that would compromise Diels. Many people were involved in this task: Ludwig Grauert, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Prussia, Hans Gisevius, former assistant to Diels, Kurt

Dalyuge, government adviser to the secret state police department Artur Nebe, Heydrich's employees, including Herman Berends. If some time ago Heinrich Himmler preferred to use Diels in the fight against Goering, now he changed tactics - he preferred to eliminate the head of the secret state police department in order to thereby enlist Goering's support.

In the meantime, Goering and Frick were able to reach a compromise. It was decided that Frick, as Reich Minister, would control the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, and Kurt Daluge would be at the head of the Reich police apparatus. Such a development of events threatened the plans of Himmler, who could not be satisfied with the fact that the police in Germany would not be subordinate to him at all. In addition, it was disturbing that Goering and Frick intended to limit the number of arrests of suspects as a preventive measure. At first this applied only to Prussia, but in the future it should be extended to other German states. To do this, even a meeting was held with the imperial governors. It cannot be said that this initiative did not find support. So, for example, the imperial governor von Epp and the Bavarian Minister of Justice Frank spoke out for limiting arrests. Himmler understood that if such a decision were made, then his power in Bavaria would be very limited. Therefore, he tried in every possible way to defend the right to "independent" actions of the Bavarian Minister of the Interior Wagner. One way or another, but in April 1934, Frick and Goering were able to agree that the arrests should be made in accordance with the requirements of the law. Now arrests could only be made by special authorities - in Bavaria it was the political police, and in Prussia - the secret state police department. At the same time, in Prussia, Hermann Goering could impose a "veto" on any of the arrests.

Having secured their positions, Frick and Göring decided that it was now possible to hand over leadership of the political police to Heinrich Himmler. This also applied to Prussia. In this case, it was not about creating a single political police apparatus for the whole of Germany, but only about appointing the Reichsführer SS as head of the political police in all German lands. Goering believed that this would be only a nominal position, and Himmler himself would not be able to acquire great power. Himmler himself held a completely different opinion. He intended to turn his formal appointment into a series of organizational arrangements. It would be naive to believe that Himmler would accept the role of puppet in the hands of Goering and Frick.

Himmler's relative success in Prussia actually opened the way for him to subjugate the entire political police of the Reich. The Reichsführer SS used every opportunity to increase his power: infiltration into the authorities, "rewarding" with SS titles, the ability to correctly identify the weaknesses of competitors, diplomatic tricks, such as imaginary submission to Goering. But the most important thing that distinguished Himmler from many National Socialist figures was his secrecy. He never declared his ambitions, did not even give rise to suspicion that he intended to gain complete control over the entire German police. Such "modesty" made it possible to gain the confidence of many police officials, including those in various German lands, where they were just afraid of the folding of a centralized apparatus subordinate to Berlin. If we take into account the "starting conditions" in which Himmler began the struggle for power in 1933, then he can be called one of the most skillful "players" in the "National Socialist power field." He skillfully used the fears of different parties, balancing between state and party structures, in every possible way

fueled dissatisfaction with the attack aircraft. In addition, OH was well aware that many leaders of the National Socialist Party preferred to see the "modest" Heinrich Himmler at the head of the political police, rather than Wilhelm Frick, who actively intervened in all affairs.

So, on April 20, 1934, Heinrich Himmler was appointed inspector of the Prussian Gestapo. At the same time, Heydrich was placed at the head of the secret state police department. Hermann Goering retained the formal post of head of the Gestapo, but he did not actually deal with its activities. Heinrich Himmler used his new power to help the SS grow rapidly.

The first influx of those wishing to join the SS was observed immediately after January 30, 1933, that is, after the appointment of Hitler as Chancellor of Germany. By the spring of 1933, the SS had reached 100,000 men. Between April and November 1933, there were so many people who wanted to join the SS that it was decided to suspend this process for a while. It seemed that Himmler should have rejoiced at the rapid growth of his organization, but he also referred to this process as "the most difficult crisis that has befallen the SS." Over the following years, he was engaged in the purge of security units. As a result, by 1935, about 60 thousand people were expelled from the SS, who joined there in early 1933. Despite this, during this period, the number of SS standards increased from 50 to 100. However, the position of the Reichsführer SS was still precarious. This is indicated by the following events. In May 1933, Himmler moved the headquarters of the SS from Munich to Berlin. However, already in February 1934, he returns him back to Munich. Perhaps he wanted to be as far away from the leadership of the party and the state as possible, which would allow him to

to reorganize the leadership structure of CC. At that time, in addition to the headquarters, it consisted of three departments: the department that dealt with the general conduct of affairs, the SD, and the department for race and settlements. As already mentioned, the heads of the SS General Directorate, Weikert and Schneider, were caught embezzling funds, after which they were removed from their posts and expelled from the SS.

In February 1934, Himmler appointed Oswald Pohl, former naval treasurer and veteran of the National Socialist Party, to this responsible post. At this time, Himmler was in dire need of a good financier. The fact is that the SS, which until now was an integral part of

The SA, received subsidies from various public funds, and therefore must submit reports on the use of these funds. Himmler first spoke to Oswald Pohl about the possibility of a new appointment in May 1933, when the Reichsführer-SS was in Kiel. A few days later, Pohl sent a letter to Himmler saying that his work in the navy was not satisfying. Himmler took an immediate liking to the man, but getting him into the leadership of the SS was a long process. Leaving the service in the Navy was associated with many formalities that dragged on for more than one month. Only on February 1, 1934, Himmler appointed Oswald Pohl head of Section IV (Administration) of the General Directorate of the SS.

After Himmler was appointed inspector of the Prussian Gestapo in April 1934, he again moved from Munich to Berlin. Following him, the entire leadership of the SS moved. It is located in the "Palace of Prince Albrecht". The name of this building for many years became synonymous with the SS and the Gestapo. By the spring of 1934, the foundations of a centralized system of terror and repression had been laid. However, Himmler, as Reichsfuehrer SS, did not yet belong to the leaders of the Reich, he was

the head of one (albeit rapidly gaining strength) of numerous national socialist organizations. The situation changed only after June 30, 1934, a date that is better known in history as the "Night of the Long Knives". The violent resolution of the protracted conflict between the SA and the political organization of the NSDAP became the springboard along which Himmler literally ascended to the heights of power.

The backstory of the "Night of the Long Knives" is full of many contradictions and a confusing set of circumstances. Since this book is dedicated to Heinrich Himmler, and not to the history of the National Socialist movement as a whole, the events of those days must be characterized only in general terms. In the first year of being in power, the National Socialists, in fact, failed to cope with the consequences of the global crisis. The country retained an army of unemployed, which numbered about 6 million people. After the general enthusiasm in Germany, there came a time of disappointment, which was noticeable both in industrial enterprises and in agriculture. To this was added dissatisfaction with the actions of SA, which literally terrified the whole country. It should be noted that in the middle of 1934 there were 4.5 million people in the ranks of the assault detachments, that is, nine times more than the SA had in January 1933. This poorly controlled party army, which was not, on top of that, a cohesive organization (many right-wing paramilitary unions, such as the Steel Helmet, etc., were merged into the SA), nevertheless claimed a special role in the National Socialist state. In practice, Ernst Röhm managed to appoint only a few leaders of the SA to the posts of imperial commissars. Ernst Röhm himself received the position of Reich Minister only on December 1, 1933. Meanwhile, the idea of a "second revolution" began to circulate in the ranks of the stormtroopers. After most of the political

opponents of National Socialism ended up in camps, in practice this idea began to be expressed in the intimidation of burghers and the population as a whole by stormtroopers, which not only did not give the SA much popularity, but also once again emphasized the aggressive, uncontrollable nature of the assault squads.

Meanwhile, Ernst Röhm was trying to determine how the relationship between the SA and the Reichswehr should have been built. At first, it was planned to entrust the stormtroopers with pre-conscription training of young people, then this idea was transformed into the idea of creating armed police detachments from stormtroopers, and then the "SA People's Army". In the "people's army" the Reichswehr was assigned only the role of a training base, which the regular military could not do. To put an end to these throwing, on February 28, 1934, Hitler publicly declared that Ernst Röhm's "war" plans had no basis.

In the spring of 1934, conservative circles planned to use the discontent of the SA to re-establish a coalition government. Some of the conservatives even planned the restoration of the monarchy, which, in their opinion, could happen after the death of the 86-year-old

Reich President Hindenburg. The spokesman for these circles was Vice-Chancellor von Papen. As a result, a coalition began to take shape, which was supposed to oppose the SA. It consisted of party functionaries, representatives of the Reichswehr and the leadership of the SS associated with the political police. In early 1934, Diels, who was still the head of the Prussian secret state police department, began to collect dirt on the leadership of the SA. In early February 1934, the Reichswehr joined this activity. After the leadership of the Prussian Gestapo passed to Himmler and Heydrich, they not only did not abandon this idea, but significantly intensified

activities in this direction. These actions have not gone unnoticed. In May 1934, Ernst Röhm ordered the collection of information about "activities hostile to the SA." In June 1934, the National Socialists planned to launch a campaign against the "grunts", by which they meant the conservatives. It would seem that the conflict with the SA faded into the background. However, it was the conservatives who largely provoked the "night of the long knives".

On June 17, 1934, von Papen delivered a speech at the University of Magdeburg, in which he criticized the National Socialist arbitrariness. Naturally, the Ministry of Propaganda, headed by Goebbels, in every possible way prevented the distribution of the text of this speech. In response, von Papen threatened to resign, as well as to arrange for the decrepit Hindenburg to dismiss Hitler. It was decided to use the government crisis to appease the conservatives. In this situation, it was decided to sacrifice the SA. Moreover, preparations for the elimination of the leadership of the attack aircraft began even before von Papen delivered his speech. Then the commandant of Dachau, Theodor Eicke, held "staff exercises" in the vicinity of Munich. At the end of June, in the same Munich, the commanders of the Oberabschnitt SS and SD gathered, to whom Himmler and Heydrich said that in the near future "the SA rebellion was coming", and therefore it was necessary to be ready for "appropriate countermeasures."

On June 30, 1934, Ernst Röhm and most of the leaders of the SA were arrested in Bad Wiessee. Similar arrests took place in Berlin and Silesia. After that, the reprisal against the leaders of the attack aircraft began. In total, about 200 people were executed during the Night of the Long Knives. During this wave of terror, Hitler's old opponents were also destroyed - the former Reich Chancellor von Schleicher,

Gustav Ritter Carr, Gregor Strasser. During these events, Heinrich Himmler, as Reichsführer SS, formally had to obey Ernst Pémý. However, he preferred to choose the side of the "winners". He continued to maneuver, not taking a permanent position in the conflict between the NSDAP party organization, the Reichswehr and conservative politicians. He did not allow himself to openly interfere in this confrontation. Heinrich Himmler did not actually take part in the "night of the long knives" itself. More revealing is the fact that his subordinates cracked down on Ernst Röhm and Gregor Strasser, men to whom Himmler owed his political career. The NSDAP knew that the Reichsführer SS maintained contact with them even in 1934. But in the end, this tacit agreement was the most convincing proof of personal loyalty to Hitler. It was not worth discounting and prudent planning. After the elimination of Ernst Röhm, Heinrich Himmler became an independent figure, and the SS could withdraw from the subordination of the SA. Which, in fact, happened in July 1934. Then the SD was proclaimed the only intelligence service of the NSDAP, and the SS was an independent structure, completely independent of the SA.

And that was by no means the only consequence of the Night of the Long Knives. On the basis of the "Leibstandarte" and "political battalions" in the summer of 1934, "parts of the operational response of the SS" began to appear. In addition, Theodor Eicke was appointed inspector of all concentration camps in Germany and commander of all guard and security units, from which the second component of the SS, the Dead Head formation, arose. Himmler himself, while in Berlin, was able to begin the formation of a single Gestapo structure for the whole of Germany. However, he was not yet master of the situation. Frick continued to insist that independent

the repressive apparatus created by Himmler was only a "temporary phenomenon", and therefore, in time, he had to submit to the state. This was openly opposed by Hermann Goering. Himmler, on the other hand, was more cautious and tried not to interfere in the brewing conflict. It was a very successful tactical move. He gave Goering the opportunity to defend his position. As a result, the Gestapo remained an independent structure, over which some control was maintained by the Imperial Ministry of the Interior. Himmler reorganized only in 1936, when he was appointed head of the German police.

The contradictions between the SS and the SA even affected events that could have international status. First of all, we are talking about the failed putsch of the Austrian National Socialists. Since the spring of 1933, relations between Germany, where the National Socialists were in power, and Austria, where a clerical-authoritarian regime was established, deteriorated significantly. In June 1934, the Austrian National Socialists decided to overthrow the Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss. The armed groups planned to break into the government building, arrest the ministers and proclaim the new ruler of Austria, Anton Rintelen, a politician close to the National Socialists. Since the Dollfuss government dissolved parliament and imposed a new constitution on the country, the National Socialists consoled themselves with the hope that there would be no questions about the legitimacy of the "new government". The result of the coup was to be the reunification of Germany and Austria. The Austrians did not dare to act at their own peril and risk, and therefore decided to coordinate their plan with Berlin. In carrying out the putsch, the Viennese division of the SS, the 89th standard, played a central role. This unit, which consisted of former military and police officers who were fired from their jobs due to membership in the National Socialist Party, with

in the spring of 1934, it was subordinated directly to Heinrich Himmler, which caused considerable discontent among the Austrian attack aircraft.

On July 25, 1934, SS men from the 89th standard captured the office of the head of government. Having learned about the upcoming coup, most of the members of the government were able to leave the building in time. At the disposal of the SS, commanded by the former officer Otto Planetta, was only Chancellor Dollfuss. During the short-lived battle, he was seriously wounded and died three hours later, as he was not provided with medical assistance. After that, the building was surrounded by troops and police units. By evening, the putschists capitulated. Some of them were sentenced to death. Meanwhile, in the Austrian provinces (Carinthia and Styria), the events in Vienna were perceived as a sign of the beginning of the uprising. Clashes began to break out between the National Socialists and the forces of law and order, which turned into uniform military operations. Within a month, the authorities managed to suppress all pockets of National Socialist resistance. Meanwhile, people in Berlin were wondering: why did the Vienna Putsch fail? It turned out that after the SS captured the government building, Austrian attack aircraft were supposed to take to the streets of Vienna. However, this did not happen. After the events of the Night of the Long Knives, even in Austria, relations between the SS and the SA were extremely tense. So tense that the stormtroopers refused to participate in the coup, in fact putting an end to all Berlin

plans.

Friction between the SS and SA in Germany itself continued until the autumn of 1935. The situation was finally resolved only when Himmler led the entire German police. This time, international instability contributed to his significant expansion of power. failed

the Vienna putsch, the proclamation of universal military service, the occupation of the Rhineland by German troops - all this could be considered a fundamental violation of the Treaty of Versailles. And this, in turn, could be the reason for the start of hostilities against Germany. The National Socialist regime was very afraid of internal political unrest, it was a kind of "complex of 1918", when the authorities were afraid not so much of an external as of an internal enemy, "ready to stab in the back with a dagger." It was in these conditions that the terrorist system, which stands above any laws, turned out to be in demand. By this time, Himmler once again decided to reorganize the structure of the SS. Security squads

The NSDAP was to consist of three different formations: rapid response formations, guard and security formations and the so-called general SS (Allgemeine-SS).

Chapter 14

The use of SS formations during the "night of long knives" was approved not only by the NSDAP leadership, but also by the Reichswehr command. Since the expansion of the armed units of the SS did not show any claims to the military monopoly of the Reichswehr as "the only squire of the nation", the representatives of the command were ready to help the SS in this endeavor. On September 24, 1934, the Reichswehr Ministry, with reference to a decision made by Hitler, ordered the formation of SS units of operational response. It was supposed to create three regiments and one communications battalion. However, in practice, at first, the Leibstandarte regimental group was only formed. Later (when the Ministry of Reichswehr Affairs was transformed into the Ministry of Defense) it was decided that the military units of the SS would be subordinate to the military. Already from this decree it followed that the military

originally tried

limit CC ambitions. This should have been emphasized by the phrase that the SS as a whole were unarmed formations, and the creation of parts of the SS rapid response was

"exception".

They were supposed to serve in order to "perform special domestic political tasks that the Führer could assign to the SS." However, in the end it was decided that the rapid response units in peacetime should be under the command of the Reichsfuehrer SS, and in case of war be at the disposal of the Wehrmacht command (the Reichswehr was transformed into the Wehrmacht in March 1935). But even in this case, the Wehrmacht command did not hide the fact that in the upcoming war, SS units were to play a secondary role, and therefore their training should be less active than in ordinary military formations.

Naturally, this could not satisfy Heinrich Himmler. His order to recruit mainly those who had completed military service for service in the SS clearly indicated that he planned to create his own army under the SS and did not want to be content with the role of reserve formations. This desire is also indicated by the planned establishment of three schools for SS leaders, two of which were originally created as officer schools. Every eight months they were to graduate about five hundred SS officers. One could immediately notice that such efforts by Himmler bore little resemblance to the functionality of the operational response units, which was spelled out in the Decree of September 24, 1934. The inevitable fear that parts of the SS, which would later turn into the Waffen-SS, would compete with the Wehrmacht, Himmler tried to dispel during personal conversations with Werner von Blomberg and Ludwig Beck, who at that time were key figures in the War Ministry.

So, for example, in October 1934, Himmler assured the military that the SS units would in no case be a military organization parallel to the Wehrmacht, since they were intended exclusively for "cases similar to the SA rebellion." Allegedly, the military training and military organization of the SS were intended only to emphasize their "exceptional character in the composition of the NSDAP."

However, such statements never aroused much confidence among high-ranking officers. For example, this is indicated by the directives of December 18, 1934, in which Ludwig Beck, as the head of the military administration (until 1935, an analogue of the General Staff), tried to control SS units as much as possible. He "allowed" the creation of his own sapper units and communications units under the SS, after which he tried to prove to Himmler that the SS did not need their own artillery. As a result, Himmler had to re-engage in the most difficult negotiations. For some time, Hitler put an end to them. On February 2, 1935, he decided that the rapid reaction units of the SS would be expanded to the level of a full-fledged division only in the event of a war.

However, at that time, Himmler had to confirm his claims to power not only in the military sphere. This also applied to the activities of the police and concentration camps. Himmler commissioned Theodor Eicke to reform the concentration camp system even before he was appointed their inspector. So, for example, the order to rebuild the Saxon camp Lichtenburg in the "Bavarian manner" (that is, on the model of Dachau) was dated May 1934. Eicke received the post of inspector of concentration camps only a couple of months later. Formally, he was part of the general administration of the SS, but in practice he reported directly to Heinrich Himmler. At the beginning of July 1934, Eicke was

entrusted with the "inspection" of the Oranienburg camp located near Berlin. Several more small camps followed. At this time, Himmler had to constantly repel the attacks of civil servants, including ministers, who were aware of the mistreatment of prisoners in the camps. As a result, Himmler managed to convince Hitler to transform the guards of the camps into an independent armed formation, which would receive funding from the state budget. When the first reorganization of the camps was completed by the middle of 1935, there were only about 3,000

prisoners.

On October 11, 1934, Heinrich Himmler spoke to members of the secret state police department. He used the opportunity to revisit recent events. The action held on June 30, 1934, he described as "the hardest day that can befall a soldier." Explaining this idea, he continued: "We were forced to shoot at our own comrades, with whom we had spent the last eight or ten years fighting for ideals. This is the most difficult thing a person can face." However, Himmler believed that the events of the Night of the Long Knives were also an "important test". Further in his speech, Himmler tried to appear before the Gestapo as a strict but caring boss. When unsigned notes with questions began to come from the audience, he said almost like a father: "If you have a desire to meet, then my doors will always be open. You can come with business matters that concern you and your colleagues. You can come with personal problems, if you have personal troubles or if your shoes are just tight... I give you my word of honor that I will help, or at least give good advice. In matters that concerned the activities of the Gestapo, Himmler always tried to play the role

"noble boss" For example, Himmler went to great lengths to secure additional financial bonuses for the secret police.

In his speech, Himmler more than once lashed out with caustic criticism of the bureaucracy of party authorities, which should not have been characteristic of the work of the Gestapo. He urged his subordinates to "work with soldierly swiftness." In addition, the Reichsfuehrer SS painted an idealistic image of the secret police, which in his words turned not into an instrument of terror, but into a kind of public service enterprise, which, only due to circumstances, was entrusted with helping to maintain order in the country: "The people must be sure that the most just body The government in the new state is the secret state police... The people must know about our activities, although it is very difficult to do this without violating state secrets. The people should know that absolutely honest, kind and humane people work in the secret state police." After that, Himmler recommended that the Gestapo behave with visitors "politely and philanthropically." They shouldn't have screamed. According to Himmler's idea, the Germans were supposed to see the Gestapo as "assistants", not "dictators". The closing phrases of Himmler's speech were more befitting of a production meeting, but in no way a meeting with subordinates from the secret police. He urged them to use the following months to "strengthen their camaraderie" and "achieve a voluntary and joyful liberation in labor." In addition, Himmler promised to reduce the working day of the Gestapo by one hour! In exceptional cases, they could be given a free day.

If we talk about Himmler's real activities, then immediately after the "night of long knives" he spent several months in a row

tried to achieve maximum freedom for OT Goering, who continued to be the formal chief of the Prussian Gestapo. In this case, the goals of Himmler and Goering diverged. If Himmler was trying to turn the Gestapo into an effective instrument of terror that had nothing to do with bureaucratic red tape, then Goering was trying to find a way to control Himmler more easily. As early as June, Göring had demanded that Himmler provide Secretary of State Paul Kerner with a monthly list of suspects who had been detained for more than seven days. Himmler tried in every possible way to circumvent this order. He provided Goering with a list of prisoners only once, and that was only because on August 7, 1934, Hitler decided to declare an amnesty. Subsequently, there was no reporting. Dissatisfied with this, Goering decided in October 1934 to "disturb" Himmler once again. He issued a circular to the Gestapo detailing the rights he reserved to himself as chief of the secret state police. These included: the issuance of general directives, supervision of the internal work schedule, familiarization with the personal files of senior employees and "official and disciplinary supervision of the activities of the Gestapo inspector." Goering attached particular importance to the last point. He wanted to use traditional bureaucratic structures to control Himmler. In addition, he denied Himmler full control of the Prussian concentration camps.

Goering was well aware that if he agreed to this, then the state would no longer be able to somehow influence the concentration camps. However, in practice, it turned out that all Goering's orders remained only on paper. None of the Prussian officials managed to get a real opportunity to "supervise" the activities of the Gestapo. Seeing the futility of his attempts, on November 20 Goering transmitted

Himmler the post of head of the Gestapo. From that moment on, Himmler was both inspector and head of the secret state police. Himmler managed to win the next round of the struggle for power.

The strengthening of Himmler's power was accompanied by several organizational processes that took place within the SS. First of all, attention should be paid to the creation of the SD-Gestapo tandem. If in 1933-1934 Himmler used the SD as a tool that helped him in the struggle for new spheres of influence, then after the "night of long knives" the SS security service had to perform the functions befitting the Gestapo. To avoid mutual competition, at the end of 1935, Himmler issued "general service instructions" that were intended for both the Gestapo and the SD. The need for close cooperation between these two departments was spelled out in a separate paragraph.

Wanting to consolidate his "conquests" in power structures, in the spring and summer of 1935, Heinrich Himmler repeatedly tried to prove that his radical methods of doing business were fully justified. It was at this time that he introduced the phrase "communist threat" into circulation. By this time, the structure of the communist underground was well known to the Gestapo and SD. The agents of the secret police managed to identify almost all the connections of the communists who remained at large and trace them to the lowest level. In order to liquidate the communist underground, only an order was needed. But Himmler was in no hurry with this - he preferred to carry out repression in portions. The communists became a kind of tool in his hands, since almost the entire communist underground, after the next defeat, reappeared under the actual control of the Gestapo. One of these big raids was supposed to happen exactly in the middle of 1935.

of the year. Himmler needed it to justify the very fact of the existence of a centralized apparatus of terror - since there are enemies of the Reich, it means that the Gestapo and the SD were needed. In fact, he never intended (at least until the outbreak of World War II) to completely eliminate the so-called communist resistance. If Himmler's position had become precarious, he could once again play the "red menace" card. Arrests over 10

thousand members of the Communist Party, which were held during 1935, allowed Himmler to become the master of the situation. In February 1936, on his initiative, the Law "On the Gestapo" was adopted in Prussia, according to which the secret state police turned into an independent authority, which was not only not actually controlled by state authorities, but could detain suspects for an unlimited period.

Himmler's desire to free the Gestapo from the "obtrusive fetters of the law" was associated with a broad public campaign that started in May 1935. It was then that an article by Heydrich was published in the SS magazine *Black Corps*, which was called "The Transformation of Our Struggle." For a while, the title of the article turned into a special section. The materials published in it boiled down to one simple idea - the destruction of organizations hostile to National Socialism did not at all mean a final victory over the internal enemy. The "real threat" came from the minds that continued their relentless struggle against the National Socialist state. As the main opponents were designated: world Jewry, world freemasonry and political clericalism. It was emphasized that the "enemies" could quite successfully integrate into the administrative and political apparatus of the "new state", where they carried out their invisible activities. IN

In this case, Himmler took some security measures. From that moment on, he could interpret any criticism addressed to him as "the intrigues of enemies." It is very significant that if some time ago the "Bolsheviks" were portrayed as almost the main enemies of the Reich, now they acted only in the form of puppets, which were controlled by the "true enemies of Germany."

In fact, the slogan about the "transformation of struggle" could be used for several purposes. On the one hand, this meant that it was necessary to wage a "spiritual struggle." It is very significant that it was at this time that the "Heritage of the Ancestors" was created, which, having turned into an SS research society, was supposed to actually interpret German and German history anew. In addition, the "transformation of the struggle" indicated that after the destruction of the communist underground, the Gestapo decided to work against "spiritual enemies" and "instigators". In 1936, Heydrich and his collaborators summarized these ideas, which resulted in four main points. Firstly, a comprehensive struggle was to be waged against "political opponents" (Jews, Freemasons and politicized priests), which in many respects was to have a preventive character. Secondly, the political police in their activities should not have been limited by law. Thirdly, the Gestapo, SD and general SS were to merge, creating a "security state corps". Fourthly, it was necessary to show "impregnable firmness" in relation to those who interfered with the work of the Reichsfuehrer SS.

The contours of this program were first voiced by Heinrich Himmler on November 12, 1935 in Goslar, where a congress of German peasants was taking place. He declared that "the SS must see to it that in Germany, in the very heart of Europe, internal enemies or external emissaries can never again ignite

the fire of the subhuman Jewish-Bolshevik revolution." "We will know everything about these forces, about their existence, about their even the most insignificant actions. And if they have existed for decades and even millennia, then this will not prevent us today from bringing the ruthless sword of justice over them." In his speech to the Prussian State Council, Himmler again willingly used the words "harsh" and "ruthless." He stated: "The opinion that the political struggle against opponents: Jewry, Bolshevism, long-lived Freemasonry and similar forces that opposed the revival of New Germany is over, in my opinion, is the deepest delusion. Germany is probably only on the verge of a decisive world clash with these subhuman forces. Himmler was the first to publicly use the formula he considered apt to refer to a conglomeration of all future "enemies of Germany".

At the same time, Himmler is trying to use Hitler, whose decisions were automatically elevated to the rank of law. So, for example, in June 1936, Himmler was able to convince the Fuhrer that the guards of the camps had to be turned into an independent military formation. October 18

1935 Hitler (again, at the suggestion of Himmler) decides that the entire German police should be reorganized and subordinated to the Reichsführer SS. However, Himmler would not receive a new appointment until nine months later. Only in 1936 he will be called the Reichsführer SS and chief of the German police. Until that time, Frick tried to convince Hitler, who hatched his own plans. He assumed that the Gestapo was to return to the general police apparatus, subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior. In fact, in October 1935, Himmler was able to achieve much more than just control of the German police. He was able to receive a "blessing"

the Fuhrer for the activities of the SS officer schools, as well as the possible expansion of the SS operational response units.

Himmler took charge of the German police on June 17, 1936. His full title was "SS Reichsführer and Chief of the German Police in the Imperial Ministry of the Interior." Himmler's formal subordination to Frick had no consequences. If someone believed that the SS men would be attached to the police, then in practice everything turned out to be exactly the opposite - it was the police that were attached to the SS structure. It was from that moment that one could talk about the folding of a centralized repressive apparatus. What many of the land functionaries feared so much happened - they lost their influence. At one time they supported Himmler, as they believed that they could thus secure their "land principalities", but it was Himmler who put an end to their "autonomy" from Berlin.

Chapter 15

Under any dictatorship, the head of the police apparatus must confront the imaginary and real opponents of the regime. Under any dictatorship, the head of the police (or similar agency), on the one hand, must constantly confirm that the regime has opponents, and on the other hand, must constantly demonstrate a successful fight against these opponents. According to many researchers, the problem lies in the fact that the declared threat and the repression carried out were in an "adequate ratio". If the repressions are too "successful", then this will weaken the position of the head of the police, since the need for his "services" will automatically disappear. If the "threat" posed by opponents does not (at least in words) decrease, or, moreover, constantly increase, then the question of the effectiveness of the applied

measures, as well as the suitability of the chief of police for his position. From a structural point of view, the head of the police in a dictatorship must find the "right balance" between a potential threat and successful countermeasures that should neutralize this threat.

If you look at the Third Reich and, in particular, at the situation in which Himmler found himself in the 30s, the picture looks like this. At first, the main opponents of the National Socialists were the Communists. In 1933, reports from the SD and the Gestapo constantly pointed to the "communist threat", which was the reason for the fierce persecution of members of the communist movement. However, this card could not be played indefinitely. Otherwise, one could get the impression that the whole of Germany consisted only of communists, or that the punitive bodies could not cope with the task assigned to them. To be left without "opponents" for Himmler meant to weaken his position of power. There were only two ways out of this situation. On the one hand, to significantly expand the list of opponents of the regime, on the other hand, to take a course on "preventive defense." If we do not take into account the real actions of the really existing anti-fascist resistance, then the main efforts of the SD, Gestapo and general SS should have been focused in the medium and long term on identifying potential centers of discontent. Since the threat emanating from these outbreaks was largely imaginary, the perception and evaluation of the effectiveness of the punitive organs largely depended on how convincingly the image of the enemy and the danger emanating from him would be imposed on the population.

When, in the autumn of 1935, Himmler received from the Fuhrer agreement in principle to conduct a "precautionary

activity", TO he conceived the implementation of this repressive program on several levels. First, Himmler planned to portray the fight against the communists not as persecution and arrests, but as preventive measures of defense.

This was the only way to explain why the number of arrested communists was steadily growing. The struggle against communism had to be justified not by the actions of the anti-fascist resistance, but by the alleged "communist instigators" and "troublemakers" in the "people's community". Special attention should have been paid to the intellectuals who expressed sympathy for the communists and other "anti-national forces". In this case, under the guise of combating the "communist threat", it would be possible to organize the persecution of Jews or opposition-minded priests. Thus, the vector of repression gradually shifted. Considering that by 1937 the National Socialists had temporarily ceased their struggle against the Church, the persecution of the Jews automatically intensified.

Secondly, Himmler tried to apply the practice of "preventive defense" to the most harmless forms of public discontent, which could not even be classified as resistance. We are talking about the spread of rumors, about told anecdotes, about jokes about the National Socialist regime and the leaders of the NSDAP, about public demonstrations of dissatisfaction with the "New Germany", about adherence to liberal church principles, etc. These "threats" allegedly could cause harm "cohesion of the people". The justification for the intervention of the Gestapo and the police in this case was in the phrase that they were "custodians of the people's community."

Thirdly, Himmler tried to present in a new light the traditional police functions, namely the fight against crime and crime. This time the offender became such not because of social factors, but because of his "racial and biological anomalies." In this case, the preventive elimination of these "racial and biological anomalies" was to become the basis for a significant reduction in crime in Germany. And finally, Himmler planned to entrust the police with the fight against "an infection that threatens the people." By this phrase, he meant abortion and homosexuality, which "threatened" the racial and biological qualities of the German people, as well as hindered its multiplication.

Since the transition to the practice of "preventive defense" was planned, a reorientation of the traditional activities of the police should have automatically occurred. The police, integrated into the repressive apparatus, had to be guided by a new "division of labor". Since the fight against crime turned into a "logical" continuation of political terror, the Gestapo received a certain priority. However, if earlier, in the implementation of political terror, the ordinary police performed a secondary ("auxiliary") role, now they had to engage in the identification of "potential threats" in close conjunction with the Gestapo and the SD. Mandatory ideological training of police officers, as well as the use of racial and biological criteria in the selection for work, led to the fact that the police were actually merged into the SS. In 1936, Himmler gained control of the entire police apparatus of the Reich, not just as an organizational structure, but was able to achieve a new competence, which, in fact, allowed him to merge the SS and the police. Himmler not only reorganized the police and repressive apparatus, but actually created

"security state corps", which was supposed to eliminate all obstacles and "threats" that hindered the development of the "Aryan race" and the German people.

When Heinrich Himmler took office as chief of the German police in June 1936, he made a speech in the courtyard of the Reich Ministry of the Interior in which he tried to justify the reorganization of the police apparatus. In his speech, he emphasized the upcoming clash with external opponents of National Socialism. "Being in the heart of Europe, we are surrounded on all sides. On all borders we are surrounded by a world that is more and more imbued with the spirit of Bolshevism, in which the power of the Jews is steadily increasing, in which the tyranny of destructive Bolshevism is coming. Unforgivable license and mistake

is the idea that these processes will end in the coming years. We must be guided by the fact that this struggle will last at least as long as the life of one person lasts. This very ancient struggle between people and non-humans in modern conditions takes the form of a clash between the Aryan peoples and the Jews and their puppets - the Bolsheviks. I see it as my task to prepare all the people. If the Wehrmacht guards our borders from external enemies, then the police, merged with the order of guard detachments, must become an organization that ensures the security of the Reich from the inside.

The idea of joining the "SS Order" was a common thread in many of Himmler's speeches. A few weeks later, Himmler again returned to this topic in his article, which was published in the Bulletin of the Academy of German Law. In this material, Himmler stated that the program of the "security state corps", originally carried out by the SS and the political police, could only be completed with

provided that the police be merged with the SS. Himmler hinted unequivocally that after his appointment as chief of the German police, the Gestapo would not merge back into the police apparatus, but, on the contrary, the police would follow the path previously outlined for the Gestapo. The police had to get rid of the traditional administrative structure, after which, on new principles, they would become, together with the SS, part of the "security state corps".

A few months later, Himmler began to actively promote a new, even more radical idea. He actively promoted the need for the police to refuse to act on the presentation of the prosecutor's office. Himmler, in alliance with Werner Best and Heydrich, for several years sought to ensure that the Gestapo received a special status that was not controlled by the state. Now he planned to apply this practice of uncontrollability to the entire police force. Quite characteristically, Himmler openly demonstrated his complete disregard for existing laws, the rejection of prosecutorial representations, and contempt for the principles of maintaining law and order in October 1936 during a meeting of the Committee on Police Law. To all the objections, Himmler only noticed that the Germans, with their penchant for regulation, for strict adherence to established procedures, "developed two types of people: officials and soldiers." At the same time, he emphasized that the policemen were neither soldiers nor officials. They were supposed to become a new type of people - "soldier officials".

Himmler had begun to extol the connection between bureaucracy and servicemen about six months earlier. This happened in March 1936, when the Reichsfuehrer SS spoke before the Prussian State Council. Then he characterized the unity of these two types as the basis for the Gestapo. However, over time, Himmler still decided to make adjustments

into your ideas. In the autumn of 1936, OH proclaimed that "soldier bureaucracy" was to become a model for the entire German police force. "Usually this is the lot of entire generations over the centuries. However, the non-bureaucratic and non-soldier organization of the SS, reminiscent of an order and built on the recognition of blood, will contribute to this education.

In March 1937, Himmler again gave a public interpretation of the new tasks of the police. The reason for this was the preparation of a jubilee collection, the release of which was timed to coincide with the 60th anniversary of Wilhelm Frick, Himmler's main competitor in the "police issue". Himmler wrote an article for the collection, in which he talked about the "legality of a non-legal state." In particular, the Reichsfuehrer SS pointed out that the activities of the police could not in principle be regulated and limited by laws. According to Himmler's ideas, two main duties should have been assigned to the police: "a) the police had to carry out the will of the leadership of the state and create the order desired by this leadership, maintain it; 6) the police had to guarantee the existence of the German people as a whole and natural organism, maintain its vitality, protect the people's institutions from destruction and decay. For this reason, the rights of the police, which were given such responsible tasks, "cannot be limited by formal requirements, since such obstacles would be contrary to the orders of the state leadership." Like the Wehrmacht, the police "could and should act according to orders received, and not

according to the laws." After that, Himmler tried to draw a line between the functional duties of the order police and the security police.

While the former was predominantly responsible for "maintaining public order", the latter were

"security tasks were set to repel the aggression of all forces that could weaken health, undermine the vitality of the people and the viability of the state." At the same time, the criminal police had to show interest in those people "who, due to physical or mental degeneration, have abandoned their natural connection with the people's community and preferred to follow only their own interests, which could ultimately undermine the security of the people and the people's community." It was assumed that such criminal elements could become "tools in the hands of the ideological and political enemies of the German people, being used to undermine the unity of the German people and destroy state power."

In the introduction to this anniversary collection, Heydrich linked Himmler's ideas about the "protective tasks of the security police" with the so-called offensive component. The security police had to "look ahead aggressively, analyze all subversive elements so that they could be secured in time." Heydrich pointed to a direct connection between ordinary criminal offenses and political threat. "The sub-human threatens the health and life of the national organism in two ways. On the one hand, he can act as a criminal who violates public order. At the same time, it can be at the disposal of the anti-people forces, becoming a tool for the implementation of their plans. According to Heydrich, the ideological and spiritual opposition to National Socialism is associated with "sub-humanity, which is always prone to disorder." It was assumed that Freemasons, Jews, Catholics could "use any criminal groups that somehow intend to carry out aspirations harmful to the German people."

In this description of the activities of the security police, everything turned out to be mixed with each other: the fight against criminality and crime, the fight against "subhumanity", the fight against public disorder, the fight against Masons, Jews, Catholics. Moreover, this struggle had to be waged, as they say, "in advance". It can hardly be more clearly shown that the policy of "preventive security" assumed the presence of enemies of the most diverse nature.

As one would expect, in order to cope with this "powerful enemy alliance", the German police needed unlimited power and virtually unlimited powers. As a result, the requirements of Himmler and Heydrich were satisfied - the police in their activities could not rely on laws. At the same time, no revision of the tasks assigned to the police was carried out in the police law itself. Until 1945, there was some kind of "legal basis" for this. As such, emergency decrees were approved, which were approved by the Reichstag after its arson in February 1933. By and large, the German police, whose leadership was entrusted to Heinrich Himmler in 1936, were in a constant state of emergency for several years.

In all his public statements that concerned the activities of the German police, Himmler did not miss the opportunity to mention the "consistency" and "firmness" of the Gestapo and the SS in relation to "enemies of the people and the state." The Reichsfuehrer SS himself never hid that the guard units "were not very popular among the population." It didn't bother him at all. On the contrary, most likely, Himmler deliberately tried to surround the complex associated with the SS, the Gestapo and concentration camps, with a certain touch of fear and horror. Back in November 1935, at the Congress of Peasants in Goslar, he

admitted that "in Germany there are still some people who feel sick at the sight of a black uniform." "We treat this with understanding and do not expect that we will be able to win the love of absolutely everyone. It is important for us to respect the people who love our Germany. We should be afraid of those who have a bad conscience, who once and somehow guilty before the Fuhrer and

nation." Himmler allowed himself such harsh and frank phrases not infrequently. In his radio address, which was broadcast in January 1937 on the occasion of the celebration of the German Police Day, he said that he saw the main task of the police as "to harm all malicious enemies and opponents of the National Socialist state." Himmler emphasized that he did not care who was the enemy of Germany: "the apostles of Moscow", "incorrigible reactionaries" or "confessional bores". After that, he continued: "It is better to be misunderstood units, to be hated by several enemies, however, despite this, fulfill your duty to Germany."

Such bellicose statements were usually offset by phrases to the effect that "a normal German should not have been afraid of the Gestapo." They say that a normal person in the Gestapo will be treated "correctly and fairly." Such a contradictory image of the activities of the police and the Gestapo even found its own lexical formula, which was voiced by Himmler during a radio address on the Day of the German Police. "Be tough and uncompromising where it's needed, understanding and generous where it's needed."

The National Socialists, beginning in 1933, constantly publicly emphasized that they would be cavalier and tough on political opponents. At first, the defeat of the communist and

Marxist camp. However, by the mid-30s, the emphasis was on other points. Now Himmler preferred to say that the police in general and the security police were primarily on guard of the "people's community", trying to nip any resistance and "anti-popular inclinations" in the bud. At the same time, the idea of "police justice" was openly voiced, which in practice meant the possibility of punishing any person who was a real or imaginary opponent of National Socialism. But still, it is impossible not to notice that after Himmler stood at the head of the German police, more and more often the words began to be heard that the policeman was primarily a "friend and helper." Himmler turned this phrase almost into the official slogan of the National Socialist police, which, probably, wanted to emphasize the "great moral responsibility" that was assigned to the German police. A certain myth about the police was formed in German society, primarily about the "ubiquitous Gestapo". Much of this was done through the media. A very interesting fact: since 1937, German Police Day lasted almost a week. During this week, a mass of information spilled out on the population, which contributed to the formation of the "police myth".

The "understanding and generous" police in Himmler's ideas had to rely on "the real and conscious help of every German people's comrade." The Reichsfuehrer SS has repeatedly called for this. Therefore, it may seem doubly strange that, as a result, Himmler was very dissatisfied with the amount of "assistance" that was provided to the German police in their daily work. The Third Reich was simply littered with denunciations and anonymous letters. During his speech at the 1936 summer solstice in Brocken, Heinrich Himmler declared almost indignantly: "Just

it becomes clear to the police and security services that Germany is the largest accumulation of rumors and gossip that can only exist in nature. Sometimes it takes real art to maintain respect for people who constantly denounce each other, showing the world their own dementia. In Germany, you can generally do without secret agents - everything can be learned from denunciations anyway.

German researchers of the history of the Gestapo with numbers on their hands showed the veracity of Himmler's words. For example, in Düsseldorf, only 15% of investigation cases were initiated by the Gestapo itself. Denunciations accounted for 26%. Approximately the same picture could be observed in other cities.

However, during this period, Himmler was concerned not only with the problem of opponents of the regime. He was looking for reasons to carry out the expansion of the SS units of the operational

response. On October 1, 1936, he created an inspection of operational response units, which was supposed to be subordinate to the SS Main Directorate. At the head of this inspection, Himmler put Paul Xayccepa, who was the head of the SS officers' school in Braunschweig. In addition, the Reichsführer ordered the creation of, in addition to the Leibstandarte, two more new regimental groups - the SS standards Deutschland and Germany. After the Anschluss of Austria took place and this European country was annexed to the Third Reich, the Vienna SS Fuhrer Standard was created. To this we must add the fundamental expansion of the armed formations of the SS "Dead Head", which was an inevitable consequence of the increase in the number of concentration camps. In April 1937, the "Dead Head" consisted of three armed standards.

On August 17, 1938, Himmler managed to convince Hitler of the need to change the status of the Rapid Response SS units. From now on, SS units were not Wehrmacht formations, but police units. They were proclaimed "permanent armed units". However, if the parts of the "Dead Head" served "to carry out special tasks of a police nature", then the SS rapid response units were at the "exclusive disposal of the Fuhrer." It cannot be said that the status of SS units has become more definite than it was indicated in 1934. At that time, it was clear that the SS units were intended to perform "internal political functions", and in case of war they were subordinate to the command of the Wehrmacht. Trying not to arouse undue suspicion, even in January 1937, Himmler assured army officers that in the event of a war, he was ready to put police units at the disposal of the Wehrmacht, and to form a "rapid deployment corps" from the standards of the "Dead Head". However, during the same speech, he emphasized that in addition to the classical theaters of warfare (on land, in the air and at sea), there would be a "fourth front", namely an "internal German theater of warfare". Himmler expressed his conviction that in the coming war there should be no fundamental differences between external hostilities and maintaining order within the country. In accordance with these ideas, he built his "security state corps."

Himmler expressed a similar thought on November 8, 1938, when he spoke to the SS Gruppenfuehrers. He once again said that there was no difference between the internal political functions of the SS and the conduct of hostilities at the front. "The overall task of the SS is, together with the police, to ensure the security of Germany inside the country. The task can only be completed when part of the guards

detachments are at the front... If we don't suffer losses at the front, if we don't fight the enemies, then we won't have the moral right to shoot people inside the country. We will not be able to shoot cowards and deserters. For this, there are units of the Rapid Response SS, which have been given an excellent task - to be on the battlefield. Subsequently, Himmler announced his intention to create his own army corps, and by no means a full-fledged division, as was planned in 1934. Obviously, the Reichsfuhrer did not intend to provide the Wehrmacht with SS units as "auxiliary units." This was indicated by the very development of the SS units. Between January 1935 and December 1936, their number increased from 5 thousand to 14 thousand people. At the same time, the number of units of the "Dead Head" increased from 2 thousand to 9 thousand people.

Himmler originally planned the SS units as something special. During a meeting on the occasion of the next anniversary of the "beer putsch", on November 8, 1938, he told the SS Gruppenfuehrers: "I told the commander of the Deutschland standard that I think it's right if there is not a single SS prisoner. He will have to commit suicide. We will not take anyone prisoner either. The war of the future is not a skirmish, but a clash of peoples not for life, but for death... If the life of our people is at stake, we must be deprived of any compassion. We should not care if thousands of people die in the city. But we must be prepared for the fact that we ourselves will perish. If need be, I will do it myself, and I expect you to do the same."

Heinrich Himmler repeatedly described the SS as an "order". This was not a simple metaphor. With your own mindset,

rituals, awareness of elitism, the SS really looked like a knightly order, in which the Reichsfuehrer was the master. Himmler was even able to develop his own leadership style. He closed the SS exclusively on himself. The worldview that the SS were supposed to share was that of Himmler. He himself considered himself not just a leader, but a trustee and educator of the SS men. Himmler determined not only the principles that the SS officers were to follow, but even tried to regulate their personal lives. The entire apparatus of the SS, which was quite intricate, was built in such a way that only Heinrich Himmler could control it. By dividing the powers between the heads of several main SS departments, Himmler did everything possible so that the structure of the guard detachments did not break up into autonomous organizations. At the same time, he had neither a deputy who would have the right to make decisions in the absence of the Reichsfuehrer SS, nor a certain collegial body that would regularly meet in meetings. Conversations with individual SS Gruppenfuehrers were by and large one-sided - senior SS officers had to listen to Himmler's appeals. The same preferred not to be limited to making general decisions, often he interfered even in the most insignificant matters. It looked somewhat paradoxical when one of the rulers of the Third Reich determined what font this or that book should have been printed in, or studied the personal files of not the highest-ranking SS men. However, contrary to popular belief in the historical literature, Himmler was not a bureaucrat. Pedantry was a character trait that could be traced in him almost from childhood. But bureaucracy was alien to him. Himmler did not want to create a frozen administrative structure, which would be guided in its activities by certain directives and clearly formulated rules. He, from his own experience

knew that bureaucratic departments, by their nature, limit the freedom of action even of leaders, making them predictable. Himmler, on the other hand, tried to be completely unpredictable. He perfectly understood that the spontaneity of actions, multiplied by his secrecy, in the struggle for power became not so much a disadvantage as a trump card.

This style of leadership was determined by Himmler's pathological distrust, his need for complete control of the situation and his inability to delegate authority to other people. Himmler tried to personally direct the steadily growing apparatus, often drowning himself in countless solutions to particular problems and insignificant instructions. As mentioned above, in many cases he preferred to reserve the right to resolve issues that were not of the most fundamental nature. The Reichsfuehrer SS endlessly informed, advised, censured and ordered. He did not think that details and small problems did not matter. Himmler usually appeared in his working office at about 10 o'clock in the morning. If there was no need to travel around the country, then he could stay at work until 2 am, occasionally interrupting for lunch and dinner. But still, he preferred to lead the SS not from behind a desk, but while staying, so to speak, at the "scene". He recommended a similar course of action to all his subordinates. So, for example, at a meeting with the leaders of the SS and police, which took place on September 16, 1942, he stated: "It cannot be an accident that if I go somewhere, I solve a large number of problems. I am not doing this in Berlin, but I am going to Lublin, Lemberg, Reval, etc. And then on the spot in the evening I can make eight, ten or twelve fundamental decisions. Do the same!"

During his entire stay in the ranks of the NSDAP, Himmler was constantly on the road. As an assistant to the Gauleiter in the "combat" 20s, he traveled all over Lower Bavaria on a motorcycle; as Deputy Reich Propaganda Director, he traveled by train through all the lands of Germany; as Reichsfuehrer SS, he preferred to use a special train, plane or light all-terrain vehicle, which delivered him to many parts of Europe. When World War II broke out, Himmler took immense pleasure with a small group of his "paladins" inspecting the occupied territories, where traces of recent battles could be seen. In such cases, he preferred to drive himself. In the photographs that Himmler sent during the war to his daughter Gudrun in Gmünd on the Tagernsee, he could not be

found imprinted behind a desk. But there are plenty of pictures showing Himmler talking to someone, making a trip, speaking, inspecting. This is exactly how the Reichsfuehrer SS wanted to see himself: sociable, operational. He wanted to appear as a leader who was in the know, who was in complete control of the situation, who was ready to share the hardships with his SS men.

Himmler cared for almost all his life to appear in a "soldier's" form. Therefore, he chose a leadership style suitable for this. In order to give credibility to his (largely fictional) image, he did not even disdain a slight "correction" of his biography. So, for example, during a speech in 1936 at the summer solstice, he touched on the topic of alcohol abuse. Trying to appear as an experienced warrior, Himmler expressed his understanding of this vice with slight disdain: "We, who participated in the war and are representatives of the soldier's generation, could be characterized as

front-line drinkers and gluttons. I can assure you that when you take part in battles and do not know what awaits you in the next few hours, it is very easy to become addicted to tobacco and alcohol. And in May 1944, he told a Wehrmacht general: "In 1917, I became a Fahnejunger and met the revolution in this rank."

In the official biographies and biographical articles printed by the German press, Himmler appeared as a front-line soldier. Recall that Himmler ended up in the army only in 1918, did not take part in any battles, and was generally at home during the revolutionary upheavals. Behind this military "efficiency" and "sobriety" Himmler, as before, tried to hide his clumsiness in dealing with other people. He tried to present the qualities that served to "disguise" him as "virtue" due to his profession. He spoke about this more than once both from high tribunes and in private conversations. In 1933, he wrote to one of the German publishing houses: "Do not be angry with me for refusing to publish my biography. You should know how unpleasant it is for me to be photographed, to give interviews. For me, writing a biography is like slowly extracting a tooth."

In addition, Himmler always wanted to be a model of "decency" and "correctness." For example, he refused on principle to take free cigarettes in the SS casino in Berlin, constantly insisting that he had to pay for them. He turned down invitations from wealthy businessmen and industrialists to visit the restaurant at their expense. In addition, Himmler was a principled opponent of his family's trips being paid from the SS budget. Himmler was so pedantic that he constantly figured out how much he had to tip. In communication with employees, visitors, homeowners (during inspections and

business trips) he took care of TOM to be extremely friendly and unpretentious at the table. Himmler's bodyguard Josef Kirmeier testified after the war: "On close examination, the Reichsfuehrer SS seemed very humane and open. He was amiable and polite to almost everyone, but only as long as he was convinced of the need for it.

In fact, Himmler's behavior could change very quickly. Otto Wagner, who during the "era of struggle" was one of the key functionaries of the NSDAP, recalled that Himmler could suddenly turn from polite and amiable into "an ironic, sarcastic and cynical person." According to Albert Speer's description, Himmler was never really amiable, but "only compelled to behave correctly", that is, he feigned affability. This ostentatious politeness, bordering on duplicity, was expressed in a very specific habit of Himmler - he kept a special card file in which he recorded who and when he made gifts.

Given the specific character of Himmler, it was not surprising that he himself at first began to develop the criteria that applied to those wishing to join the SS. Even before the National Socialists came to power, he established that candidates for entry into the SS had to be at least 174.5 centimeters tall ("without shoes," the Reichsfuehrer SS explained). However, later the growth standard for future SS men dropped to 170 centimeters. In addition, with

1933, all candidates for entry into the SS were tested for "hereditary health" and "Aryan origin." It is significant that this system had been developed a year and a half earlier exclusively for the brides of SS officers who wished to marry. Veterans of security detachments underwent this procedure, as they say, "backdating". In

during this process, people had to provide their pedigree up to and including 1750. It should not have listed any "non-Aryan ancestors." Himmler even wanted to extend the duration of the genealogy to 1650. At the summer solstice in 1936, he stated that since such genealogical research was associated with significant costs, this date should have been taken into account only by the leaders of the SS. If there were ancestors of "non-Aryan origin" in the pedigree, this person was fundamentally excluded from the SS.

The racial examination of candidates for entry into the SS consisted of many points: a hygienic examination, a study of the appearance of the candidate, etc. Appearance and posture were taken into account. The check ended with an assessment of intellectual and athletic abilities. In all disputed cases, Himmler himself preferred to make the decision. The Reichsführer intervened more than once in the process of evaluating candidates for membership in the SS. So, for example, in 1938 he ruled that during the examination it was possible to be lenient towards visual defects. Controversial cases, again, were handed over personally to Himmler. So, for example, one of those who wanted to join the SS lost an eye in an accident. In addition, in May 1935, Himmler decided that in cases where it was a question of hiring in the SD, it was possible to soften the requirements for candidates as much as possible. This practice was later extended to the Gestapo. It would seem that when applying to the SS there was a very serious dropout. In 1937, during a speech to Wehrmacht officers, Himmler claimed that only 10-15% of the total number of candidates turned out to be in the ranks of the security detachments. But in practice, things looked somewhat different. If somewhere only 10-15% of those wishing to join the SS were accepted, then, for example, in the Elba Oberabschnitte in 1935-1936, this figure was 75-80%. Still racial and physical

examination of candidates for entry into the SS was maintained until the outbreak of World War II. In December 1939, Himmler decided to "improve" this process somewhat and issued an order for the introduction of special "racial cards". Changing the practice did not mean its abolition. When, during the war years, the head of the racial administration of the SS, Bruno Kurt Schulz, proposed limiting himself to providing a pedigree covering only six generations of ancestors, Himmler was extremely outraged, after which he removed Schulz from his post.

In his ideas, Himmler even created a certain image of an ideal career for an SS officer. He shared his thoughts in 1935, during a meeting with Silesian SS officers: "In the future, the most stringent requirements will be imposed on members of the SS, which will be stricter from year to year. At the age of 18, he becomes a candidate, after which he will attend school with us for a year. He will serve four days a week and twice a month on weekends. Over time, it will become clear how suitable this young man is, how much he can be prepared from a worldview point of view. After that, the young man had to go through a biography that was standard for many - to serve an imperial labor service for some time, then to serve in the army. If after that he planned to return to the SS, then he had to stay in the status of a candidate for another 15 months. Only then could he be accepted into the SS. Then, at the age of 25, the young man had to stay in the ranks of the general SS, after which he transferred to the 1st reserve. At the age of 35 to 40, he was listed in the 2nd reserve. Upon reaching the age of 45, he moved to the personnel service. According to Himmler, leaving the SS due to age was not possible - it was a lifelong duty.

In November 1938, Himmler told the head of the SS training department, who came to the Reichsführer with a report: "I

set himself the problem of our behavior, ethical questions; issues related to the attitude to the clan, family, people and state. To provide unequivocal answers to these

"ethical questions," Himmler repeatedly made speeches to SS employees in which he reproduced the uniform "catalogue of the virtues of an SS man."

At the center of this "ethical complex" was the concept of "fidelity", which was interpreted exclusively as devotion. In addition, Himmler extolled such qualities as "obedience", "comradeship", "courage", "truthfulness", "zeal", "fulfillment of duty". However, from speech to speech, he called on the SS men to "decency"! By and large, all these concepts could not have been quoted if they did not have a specific SS interpretation. "Loyalty" meant voluntary and complete submission to the Führer, which in practice meant obedience personally to Himmler. "Loyalty" was interpreted solely as a racial quality that was inherent exclusively in "true Germans." "Loyalty" could not have a rational explanation, but was a kind of emotional state or, as Himmler liked to put it, "a matter of the heart." It was "loyalty" that was the basis on which the relationship between leader and subordinate, officer and soldier, had to be built.

First and foremost, the SS had to be loyal to Adolf Hitler. In 1937, in the SS Guidebooks, Himmler's friend the poet and SS Oberführer Hans Jost wrote: "The political religion of the SS is Adolf Hitler. The concept of honor is the iron magic of the loyalty of our order, which swore allegiance to this person. The order is for service. And this ministry will immortalize Adolf Hitler and his will." Himmler expressed this idea more prosaically: "The Führer is always right. It doesn't matter if he talks about

evening dresses, bunkers or the imperial autobahns. "Loyalty" was perhaps the key concept in the oath that all SS men took to Adolf Hitler. However, if ordinary SS employees in an oath uttered the words: "I promise to be faithful to you and your cause until my death," then when taking up the post of SS Gruppenführer, the officer uttered a slightly different text. They swore allegiance "by the honor of their ancestors."

At the suggestion of Heinrich Himmler, the concern for "fidelity" acquired downright ritual forms. This found expression in the correspondence that the Reichsführer SS kept with his subordinates. If it was about a birthday, about condolences, about congratulations on the New Year, about personal letters of gratitude, then they were more like another swearing an oath. Himmler's birthday was an excellent opportunity for many to reaffirm their devotion to him. In this case, the expression "devotion" took on unimaginable forms. For example, Theodor Eicke in 1937 congratulated his boss as follows: "It is my goal, together with the people entrusted to me, to be devoted to our symbol and to be resolute as going to death. All our strength belongs to you and our Führer. Fulfillment of duty and male fidelity were and remain the morning prayer of the "Dead Head". When, in 1935, Himmler sent a "Yule lamp" as a gift to Gruppenführer Wilhelm Radis, the words of gratitude were expressed in a response letter as follows: "In its light, I and my family again swear allegiance to you. Dear Reichsführer SS, I wish you good health until your will becomes the law of life for the entire German people.

With the outbreak of war, statements about the desire to "fight until death" began to be added to the assurances of "loyalty". So,

for example, in August 1944, SS-Obergruppenführer Benno Martin, after receiving his new rank, wrote to Himmler that he was ready to "fulfill my duty to you and the guard detachments to the very last breath."

Hermann Fegelein, who at first was the head of the SS riding school in Munich, and then became the commander of the 8th SS Cavalry Division, in congratulating Himmler on his birthday promised him not only his "loyalty", but also admitted that he owed everything in his life to the Reichsführer SS. "Now in the war we are as brave as in the past sports life. As long as we are under your command and carry out your orders, even in the most difficult moments of our lives we keep faith in victory in our hearts. The cavalymen who fell in battles are evidence that they lived according to your motto: when a log of battle

only the knights are left without fear and reproach, then we must do more than our duty dictates. We keep our courage in all seasons: summer and winter. We are true to our oath and to you, Reichsfuehrer. We will fulfill everything that we promised the world You were a great patron and a strict boss, always ready to help me in my life. With the support of SS-Obergruppenführer Jüttner, you have made me what I am today."

The expression of devotion to Heinrich Himmler has acquired simply exaggerated forms from some SS leaders. They feared that they might lose the confidence of the Reichsfuehrer SS, which was a real nightmare for them. The chief of the Vienna police, Josef Fitzum, who was suspected of having warmed his hands to the "Aryanization" of Jewish property, wrote to Himmler in September 1940: "The feeling that I might lose your trust is becoming simply unbearable for me. If you still trust me, then this is for

means me a thousand times more than any formal statement."

The second pillar of the "virtues" that Himmler extolled was "obedience." It was a logical continuation of "fidelity". If "loyalty" was an emotional state, then "obedience" was the realization of this quality in practice. "Loyalty" was a kind of behavior model, a deeply felt readiness for "obedience", which was to be embodied in the performance of duty, which meant the fulfillment of any orders. Disobedience was interpreted as treason, and therefore it was not even considered as a possible phenomenon. However, in life, Himmler approached the facts of disobedience in a very differentiated way. He believed that "disobedience" was a weakness, a negative trait of the German character, but at the same time, the Germans were still by nature "uncompromising personalities." Under certain circumstances, Himmler was ready to confine himself to a minor punishment or even forgive the "guilty one." But this only happened if Himmler was confident in his "loyalty." So, for example, in 1942, the head of the SS Main Directorate, Berger, informed the Reichsführer SS about the willful behavior of General Steiner. However, later Himmler personally assured Steiner in his letter: "I have complete confidence in you."

In his keynote speech, which Heinrich Himmler delivered in 1935, he emphasized: "He who betrays allegiance is excluded from our community. Since loyalty is a matter of the heart, but by no means of reason. The mind can refuse a person, but if the heart stops beating, then the person dies. Likewise, a people that has betrayed its loyalty is doomed to death." When Himmler demanded of his people not just "obedience", but absolute devotion, and turned "loyalty" into

the highest law of the SS, then this was largely a consequence of his character.

Himmler himself never trusted people, was insecure in communication, did not have permanent attachments (that is, he did not know true devotion). He was very good at masking it. Over time, Himmler became a skilled diplomat who hid his weaknesses. However, he was not ready for sincerity. He sought to either subjugate people or control relations with them. This can be traced in the example of relations with Gregor Strasser and Ernst Röhm ("the era of struggle"), or with Hitler already during the established National Socialist dictatorship. Himmler never allowed himself to make friends with people who occupied approximately the same social position or had a similar political status. For this reason, Himmler was disliked in the party and in many ministries. To make up for this emotional insufficiency, Himmler needed constant confirmation of loyalty, for which new and new forms were constantly invented, which eventually turned into some kind of rituals.

Against the background of the detailed concepts of "fidelity" and "obedience", "partnership" looked somewhat faded and not entirely convincing. Himmler usually referred to this "virtue" in passing. Only a few detailed statements on this subject have survived. In December 1938, in an address to one of the SS units, Himmler said: "I demand that you educate each other. You must watch that there is nothing in your assault

inappropriate." Himmler never gave clarifications as to whether "partnership" was to be an emotional or conscious quality, how it was to be manifested in everyday life, to what extent it was to

correlate with such phenomena as "friendship", "trust". It is only necessary to emphasize that in 1936-1937 Himmler began to strongly oppose the formation of traditions of certain "male unions" in the SS.

At the same time, he spoke out against the famous thesis of the 1920s that "male unions" were characterized by some kind of homoerotic ties. In almost every speech, Himmler used the words "decently", "appropriately", "worthy". Often he associated them with such concepts as "pure", "noble", "generous". However, in this case, he only meant behavior that was not based on personal ("selfish") motives. Himmler believed that "dignity" was to permeate the whole world. In the preface to the specialized SS calendar for 1937, he wrote: "Each of us should meet a bad day as worthily as a good one." "Decent" and "worthy" were supposed to be even the most unseemly and criminal actions. This suggests that for Himmler "worthy" was a kind of synonym for the word "firmly", "persistently". Recalling the events of June 30, 1934, he spoke of the mass executions of attack aircraft: "We had to act like soldiers, but we always acted with dignity, without unnecessary gloating and personal insults ... However, we had to act in accordance with the principles, have in ourselves moral strength to be the instrument of the Fuhrer, which he so needed. In some cases, Himmler cynically argued that the torture, mockery and humiliation of the victims were "indecent."

Himmler continued to talk about "decency" and "dignity" even during the war years. In one of his famous speeches, he spoke of massacres and "decency". In October 1943, in Posen, Himmler told the SS Gruppenfuehrer:

"Most of you will know what a hundred, five hundred or even a thousand corpses are lying together. We must endure this, not succumb to human weaknesses, but at the same time remain a worthy person. It will toughen us up and make us tougher." However, the concept of "decency" did not apply to all occasions. As early as 1936, Heinrich Himmler, in his speech to the Prussian State Council, openly stated that "one must adhere to the worthy conduct of the fight against the enemy, if only he is worthy of it." "It would be madness to apply these noble attitudes towards the Jews and Bolsheviks, who are striving for power over the world of the Jesuits or completely lived-in Freemasonry."

Seven years later, in Posen, Himmler said that "decently" it was necessary to deal only with "representatives of our own blood." "I am not in the least interested in the fate of a Russian or a Czech ... If ten thousand Russian women fall from exhaustion while digging anti-tank ditches, then this will interest me only to the extent that this anti-tank ditch is ready. It is clear that we will never be cruel and inhuman, because this is not necessary. We Germans are the only people in the world who treat animals decently, so we will treat these animal people decently, but we will commit a crime against our own race if we take care of them and instill in them ideals so that our it was even more difficult for sons and grandsons to cope with them." In the system of concepts that Himmler built, "decency" could not apply to "animal people." They were to be used exclusively for utilitarian purposes.

Chapter 17

Himmler's ambitions eventually became so great that he ceased to be limited to modeling only the official behavior of his subordinates. At some point, Heinrich Himmler decided to control virtually the entire private life of SS employees: behavior, economic relations, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, family planning, etc.

every opportunity the Reichsfuehrer SS tried to interfere in the personal affairs of people subordinate to him. Both a high-ranking officer and an ordinary SS man could become the object of close attention. But, of course, representatives of the SS leadership more often came to Himmler's field of vision than the lower ranks. And therefore, being among the leaders of the SS was not just a service, but also a willingness to put up with the widespread control of Heinrich Himmler, who tried to change the life of "his people" in a very serious way.

By the second half of the 1930s, the leadership of the SS, to which could be attributed everyone who had the rank of at least SS Gruppenfuehrer, came from two large social groups: young soldiers of the First World War and the generation whose youth and childhood fell just at the time of World War II. war. Representatives of the first group were mainly born in the 90s of the XIX century (as a rule, after 1895), that is, they had the opportunity to volunteer for the front and by the end of the First World War they could rise to the rank of officer. It was a cohort of young lieutenants who later took an active part in the actions of volunteer corps. Many of them joined the SS even before the National Socialists came to power. The second group was represented by younger people who were born at the beginning of the twentieth century. Their personal formation took place during the war years, but they could not take part in the battles due to their age.

After 1933, this grown-up youth (including Himmler himself) began to play an important role in the SS. Naturally, among the leadership of the SS there were people of an older age, but upon a detailed study of the problem, it turns out that most of them were part of the general SS and did not have much influence. These included the regional leaders of the Steel Helmet, who, after the unification of their organization, automatically received the title of SS Gruppenfuehrer, but in practice their positions were nominal. If you look at the "youth" from both groups, it turns out that they could not find themselves in civilian life, and therefore joining the SS, which automatically meant submission to the Reichsfuehrer SS, was their "last chance". Continued failure meant that many of the future high-ranking SS officers faced many personal problems as early as the 1920s, including addiction to alcohol. After 1933, getting rid of these "habits" was not so easy, which gave Himmler an excuse to interfere in his personal life. He paid special attention to the facts of alcohol abuse, which, probably, was that part of personal habits that could most of all "discredit" the SS in the eyes of the public.

On July 26, 1939, that is, a few weeks before the outbreak of World War II, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Jeckeln received a letter from Heinrich Himmler. The Reichsführer SS reported that some time ago he received information that Jeckeln, in a state of intoxication, was driving his car at a speed of 100 kilometers per hour, "unceremoniously violating traffic rules, and showing rudeness towards other drivers and pedestrians." Himmler asked Jeckeln to answer three questions: 1) Was he in the car driving that day? 2) Did you drink alcohol that day? 3) Did he break traffic rules? Jeckeln immediately realized how before Himmler

there were rumors about his behavior. In the evening of that day, after a long pursuit at a railway crossing, his car was overtaken by a Hamburg businessman and activist of the National Socialist Motorist Corps (NSCC), who was quite indignant at the behavior of a drunk driver who was driving a car that threatened the lives of many people with his driving style. In response to the claims made, Jeckeln presented an official ID - he, among other things, was the highest leader of the SS and police of Hanover. Since Jeckeln had already received several reprimands from Himmler, the reason for which was drunkenness, the next trick did not bode well. Jeckeln urgently had to come up with an exculpatory message. In it, he reported that on that day he dined in a narrow circle with some aristocrats. The conversation continued until late in the evening. At about 20 o'clock Jeckeln went by car to his hunting lodge. During the trip, he could make only small violations, but "generally adhered to the rules of the road."

To remove the suspicion that he abused alcohol, Jeckeln wrote that on the indicated day he drank "4-5 glasses of Moselle wine", "no more than 4 glasses of schnapps" and "3 more glasses of beer." Jeckeln felt that such an amount of alcohol would not be perceived as "excessive" by Himmler. In any case, the evening drunken race through the streets of the city and along the highway had no consequences for Jeckeln.

In fact, drunk driving was not the worst thing that high-ranking SS officers could afford. Himmler perfectly remembered the events of May 1936, when SS Brigadeführer Kaul and SS Oberführer Unger arrived at Dachau with a check. As Kaul later reported in an explanatory note, between them

an "incident" has occurred. Under this word was hidden by no means an innocent incident. The SS officers first poured wine on each other (the problem was aggravated by the fact that they were in uniform, and this could be interpreted as an insult to the honor of the SS), after which they grabbed their weapons. Several shots were fired, but there were no casualties. Unger, who was ready to apologize, tried to explain the "incident" by the "good mood" that arose after drinking a certain amount of alcoholic beverages: "However, it was very late and as a result of drinking alcoholic beverages, we were in a good and elated mood." In this situation, Himmler decided not to take the case to court, as their commander Bach-Zelewski insisted, but decided to confine himself to a severe reprimand.

The case of drunken shooting was by no means isolated. When SS-Brigadeführer Karl-Heinz Bürger was planning to leave for the Ukraine in February 1941, he received a letter from Heinrich Himmler. In it, the Reichsführer SS accused Bürger, who was one of the curators of the national political educational institutions (Napolas) and was responsible for the ideological education of young people, of having taken out a weapon while drunk, which threatened the lives of many people. The burgher, who had been convicted of drunkenness more than once, decided not to lock himself up. He acknowledged that the incident took place in January 1941, when his superior, SS-Obergruppenführer Heismeyer, invited him to a celebration for the purchase of a country house. "Some kind of demon possessed me when I fired two shots from a pistol at the ceiling. This thoughtless act was caused by my internal state. I can only explain it by a deep sense of dissatisfaction that did not leave me after I was attached to the department of Obergruppenführer Heismeyer. This time Himmler did not hide his anger and indignation. He wrote that a person who "himself could not

to control his behavior, had no right to teach others our worldview." It would seem that Bürger passed a severe punishment, he escaped with a penalty and a reprimand. However, rumors about his drinking again and again reached Heinrich Himmler, and therefore he was sent to the reserve SS infantry battalion "Ost" as punishment.

That drunken SS officers did not restrain themselves in the handling of small arms is demonstrated by Himmler's order, which he gave a few months before the story of Karl-Heinz Bürger happened. The Reichsführer SS wrote: "I have been told again and again that they see members of the SS and the police who, in an inappropriate situation, carelessly use firearms. This happens, as a rule, in the Eastern regions and under the influence of alcohol. Himmler further emphasized that "such irresponsible handling of weapons is completely un-German." This order concluded: "The German uses weapons only during the battle, and such indiscriminate shooting is inherent only

Slavs."

In the summer of 1942, Matthias Kleinheisterkamp, who at that time was the commander of the SS Reich division, came under fire from Heinrich Himmler's angry criticism. The reason for the wrath of the Reichsführer SS was the information that Kleinheisterkamp was drunk half to death in the "divisional casino". Himmler wrote to the offender: "You could afford such free behavior if you were a captain or battalion commander. However, since, despite some doubts, I entrusted you with the command of a division, you must be aware that the time has passed when you could afford to get drunk. Himmler

emphasized that "the disgusting scenes of drunkenness were the result of "character flaws" that must be eradicated before

end of service." After that, Himmler removed Kleinheisterkamp from command of the Reich division, as he "damaged the prestige of the Waffen-SS." In conclusion, Himmler imposed another disciplinary sanction on the removed officer: "I expect you that in the next two years you will not drink a drop of alcohol, and by the age of 49 you will be able to do without it at all." Himmler believed that the ban on drinking alcohol was a very effective educational tool: "If someone does not know the limits in drinking alcohol and behaves like a small child, then he should be deprived of alcohol. So, for example, a gun is taken away from a child, because he does not know how to handle it. Himmler said this phrase in 1938. However, two years earlier, the tone of his statements was much more decisive and radical: "Either you demonstrate that you can do without alcohol, or you get a gun with which you must commit suicide. Days are given for reflection. Himmler repeatedly imposed bans on the use of alcohol. In 1936, such a ban was obtained by Kurt von Gottberg, who lost his leg in an accident. He was ordered not to drink alcohol for three years. Also in 1936, Otto Rahn, a writer known for his search for the Grail, who was in the service of the SS, was forbidden to drink alcohol. The ban on alcohol was somewhat relaxed by Himmler during the Second World War. With regard to serving units that were used on the Eastern Front, he allowed the use of alcoholic beverages "in moderation and if required for health reasons."

All the above examples show that Himmler, although he tried to influence drunken SS officers, in most cases limited himself to "pedagogical means" and did not resort to real disciplinary measures.

penalties. He believed that it was necessary to change the "abnormal" behavior caused by drinking, since most people "had alcohol as the cause of their personal failures," and not vice versa - that they drank because of their failures.

However, why did Himmler show some kind of "indulgence" in relation to drunkards from the SS? Did he understand that with the help of "draconian measures" it was impossible to correct the situation? Or did he know that alcohol abuse was an integral part of the paramilitarist subculture, which was largely inherited in the SS? These questions will probably remain unanswered. In any case, in 1941, Himmler ordered the creation of a "house for the eradication of bad habits" at the Buchenwald concentration camp, which was intended mainly for SS men who consumed excessive amounts of alcoholic beverages. Himmler did not consider that the direction to this "house" was some kind of punishment, but "only an educational event that was supposed to benefit the SS and police officers." Regarding the "house for the eradication of bad habits" itself, Himmler gave extremely detailed instructions in which he said that this institution was to become "an exemplary house of forced rest, in which all residents should be deprived of alcohol, which should be combined with hygiene measures, for example sports, hardening, etc." The Reichsführer SS planned that such an upbringing would contribute to "the formation of physically and mentally stable people who will later have reason to be grateful." For the practice of this "house", among other things, were inherent in the ban on smoking, "possibly vegetarian food" (oatmeal with mashed apples). In addition, regular visits to the sauna were even provided. The right to send SS men to this institution Himmler

left exclusively to himself. We must immediately make a reservation that in some cases the Reichsführer SS looked through his fingers at the drunkenness of his subordinates. In particular, this applied to Karl Maria Wiligut, who was known to the leadership of the SS under the ritual name of Weistor. This middle-aged Austrian colonel, who was able to rise to the rank of SS Brigadeführer, was mainly engaged in the construction of SS religious rituals.

Compared to drinking, Himmler was more annoyed only by the "financial uncleanness" that some of the SS employees could afford. At one time, in many respects, it was precisely on financial issues that the first president of the research society "Heritage of the Ancestors" Herman Wirth fell into disgrace. As shown in previous chapters, two heads of the SS General Directorate were expelled from the SS due to financial abuses. Himmler could not help but worry that the financial problem could make individual SS leaders "susceptible to various temptations." In June 1937, he spoke indignantly about the fact that some of the SS officers were ready to accept "offerings" from representatives of commercial and industrial circles who were trying to win over the "security state corps." Himmler preferred his officers to turn to him for support. Cases of such requests were by no means isolated. The Reichsführer SS has repeatedly provided financial assistance to the Higher SS and Police Leader in the South East Bach-Zelewski. So, for example, in 1938 he allocated 7 thousand Reichsmarks, which went to purchase a country house. In 1937, SS Brigadeführer Paul Moder informed Himmler that he was paying off an interest-free loan of 15,000 Reichsmarks that he had taken from the Hamburg businessman Hermann Remze. This amount

it took the SS man to pay "compensation" so that his wife agreed to a divorce.

In September 1939, Weimar's chief of police, SS Gruppenführer Hennicke, informed Himmler that "at the moment he was completely without a livelihood." In 1934, SS-Obersturmbannführer Obersturmbannführer asked for financial support from the Reichsführer, who reported that he was in "distress". In this case, Himmler turned down the request because he had heard that Hoffmann (formerly a vintner) was throwing wild parties. Himmler was not always ready to accommodate the requests of his subordinates. So, for example, he refused Oberführer Erwin Rösener, head of the SS personnel department. Roesener pointed out that even during the "era of struggle" his family was in debt. Himmler never provided the money. When in 1940 Marianne Bürger, the wife of Karl-Heinz Bürger (at that time the head of the Brunswick SS School) asked for an increase in her husband's salary, as she was expecting a fourth child, the Reichsfuehrer SS gave "advice" on how to more prudently use those already available in disposal of funds.

Separately, it is necessary to highlight the "case of Obersturmbannführer Ludolf von Alvensleben" (more precisely, there were several of these cases). Ludolf von Alvensleben, was the son of the owner of a noble estate. However, after the crisis of 1929, the family actually went bankrupt, owing about 750,000 Reichsmarks to creditors. By 1934, Ludolf von Alvensleben had succeeded in paying off approximately one third of these Great Danes. When he refused to make another payment to creditors (it was about the amount of 2500 Reichsmarks), Heinrich Himmler was informed about this. He reacted very sharply: "If Obersturmbannführer Ludolf von Alver

can properly meet his obligations, as a true National Socialist and an SS officer should do, then his subsequent stay in the ranks of the SS is hardly possible. The private debts of an SS officer is a matter that his superiors must take decisive care of. In July 1937, von Alvensleben again came to the attention of Himmler. At that time he was the commander of the 10th SS Abschnitt. Representatives of the Mercedes enterprise offered him the purchase of a car on very favorable terms. Himmler once again threatened to be expelled from the SS and forbade this purchase. Without naming von Alvensleben, Himmler issued an order in which he called on "SS officers to remain free and independent even in economic matters."

After that, Himmler officially began to demand that "each of the SS officers refuse to accept gifts or purchase goods on special preferential terms, even if it was related to official business." A year later, von Alvensleben again found himself in the center of "financial proceedings". This time Himmler was more "generous". In this case, von Alvensleben was allowed to act as a consultant to the Salzgitte enterprise, which would bring him about a thousand Reichsmarks a month. Why did Himmler allow him to be a paid consultant, but forbade him from buying a car that

intended to be used for official purposes? In this case, the character traits of the Reichsfuehrer SS, who sought to control all spheres of life of his subordinates, manifested themselves in the best possible way. Himmler learned about the upcoming purchase of a car when all agreements were reached between von Alvensleben and the merchants. Himmler believed that the deal, carried out without his knowledge, undermined the authority of the Reichsfuehrer SS. In the second case, all actions were in advance

agreed, which gave the chief of the SS the opportunity to appear in the role of "generous patron".

Not wanting to put up with the fact that "SS officers denigrated their uniforms with rash debts," Himmler began to carry out a whole program to identify debtors in the security forces. At the same time, many lower ranks were dismissed from the SS. When the number of such "violators" became very large, Himmler decided to change tactics. He created a special fund, which at first consisted of a million Reichsmarks, and then increased by two and a half times. These funds were used to pay off the debts of the SS, who were unable to pay their loans. After that, they had to take an oath that they would never borrow again. This demand turned into a kind of slogan: "An SS man cannot buy a single thing that he cannot pay for." During his speech, when this phrase was uttered, Himmler expressed a few more ideas: "SS employees do not have the right to buy things in installments. An SS man must be the most honest man that can exist in Germany."

Drunkenness and financial unscrupulousness were by no means the only "sins" that Heinrich Himmler tried to fight resolutely. He repeatedly criticized his officers for "exorbitant ambition and hypertrophied vanity." More than once, Himmler reproached the head of the headquarters of the Volksdeutsche Mediation Office, Hermann Berends, for his "unhealthy ambition", which interfered with the work of "this capable and courageous person." Similar reproaches were addressed to SS Brigadefuehrer Walter Schroeder, who led the SS and police in occupied Riga. Himmler was very unhappy that Schroeder openly loved

show off in the pages of local newspapers. Such "work for the public" always annoyed the Reichsfuehrer SS.

Himmler showed no less corrosiveness in matters that concerned the health of SS and police officers. He constantly ordered his subordinates to undergo medical examinations, got acquainted with medical diagnoses, gave instructions regarding the daily routine and nutrition. Sometimes he forcibly sent his officers on vacation, forbidding them even to read newspapers during their vacation. However, the constant "use" of SS officers during the war years led to the fact that many of them were not only physically exhausted, but also suffered from mental disorders. In medical records, after appropriate examinations, one could find the same type of diagnoses: "fatigue", "nervous exhaustion", "problems with nerves", "being in a state of depression".

For example, Himmler ordered a "general medical examination" of SS Gruppenfuehrer Karl Gutenberger. The reason for this was that the imperial SS doctor Ernst Robert Grawitz found in a 38-year-old SS man who neglected medical examinations "a slight indifference, euphoria and a predisposition to indifference." It was about post-traumatic stress disorder. After that, Gutenberger was sent for several weeks to the SS sanatorium "Göhenvilla", which was located in Karlsbad. SS men had already been treated there, and their behavior showed similar symptoms.

If we continue listing the most significant examples, then it can be noted that in 1944, the commander of the Croatian SS mountain division, Karl Gustav Sauberzweig, was diagnosed with "exceptional nervous strain, which bordered on mild psychosis." At

At this time, OH could not see people, HE could hear shots, fell into a trance state at the sight of blood, could not concentrate and was terribly afraid that he would have to answer for his actions.

Himmler did not send all of his wards for treatment, some of them he could simply dismiss or dismiss. So, for example, it happened with Walter Schmitt, who for many years headed the personnel department under the Reichsführer SS. Schmitt suffered from the urge to urinate constantly, which doctors determined was the result of a nervous breakdown associated with his professional activities. A nervous breakdown was also revealed in Richard Hildebrandt, the highest leader of the SS and police in the Vistula region, who in 1942 began to complain of constant dizziness and fatigue. In order to "not take rubbish out of the hut", in many cases, reminiscent of the above, a medical examination was carried out by the Munich therapist Karl Fahrenkamp. He was considered a specialist in occupational psychoses. His special position in the SS hierarchy was emphasized by the fact that this physician headed a special department E, which was created at the personal headquarters of the Reichsführer SS. In 1940, Fahrenkamp created a special greenhouse in the Dachau camp in which medicinal plants were grown. In 1942, a laboratory was set up on its basis, in which special cosmetics and medicinal products were produced from plants, which were designed, among other things, to help SS officers cope with psychoses and overcome nervous exhaustion. Back in 1941, Himmler expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Fahrenkamp for his work: "I am infinitely glad that you are treating my people correctly and prudently, who are in many ways intolerable patients." Himmler himself also resorted

to the services of Fahrenkamp, as he continued to be disturbed by stomach pains, which he acquired in his youth. In addition, each visit to the doctor was a convenient occasion for the head of the SS to get acquainted with the medical histories of his

officers.

Since the medical examination of high-ranking SS men was not to receive a wide resonance, and information about nervous breakdowns and illnesses was to remain the lot of only a small group of people, Himmler from the very beginning formed a certain circle of especially close personalities whom he could completely trust. Among them was his longtime friend Karl Gebhardt. By that time, he was already a professor of medicine and was in charge of the Hohenlinden sanatorium. It was in this sanatorium that Hedwig Potthast, Heinrich Himmler's lover, gave birth in 1942. Here, in 1943, the head of the personal staff of the Reichsführer SS, Karl Wolf, was treated. Himmler did not forget his friend - somehow, as a token of gratitude, he even presented him with a dinner service for twelve people. The sanatorium sometimes turned out to be people who were not formally employees of the SS. So, for example, in 1938, Karl Gebhardt performed a knee operation on Lieutenant General Walther von Reichenau, who played a large political role among the German generals. Representatives of the old noble families could also be here. Karl Gebhardt invariably reported to Heinrich Himmler on the progress of all operations and treatment. In addition, it should be noted that Richard Walter Darre, who was not only the imperial leader of the peasants, but for a long time was the head of the SS Main Directorate for Race and Settlements, was treated in Hohenlinden. When an assassination attempt on Heydrich took place in Prague in 1942, Himmler urgently sent Karl Gebhardt there. However, the professor of medicine

managed to save the life of the chief of the SD, who was appointed imperial protector of Bohemia and Moravia.

The degree of Himmler's trust in Karl Gebhardt is evidenced even by the fact that when Himmler's father was diagnosed with cancer in 1936, he immediately turned to his old friend. Gebhardt studied the medical history and dissuaded Himmler from performing the operation. Himmler took the medical advice. The Reichsführer SS relied on his advice even in unusual matters. So, for example, in January 1938, Himmler sent an old friend an ancient recipe in which

described the manufacture of a drug that allegedly allowed the fight against tuberculosis. Karl Gebhardt, fearing nothing, said that this remedy could hardly overcome tuberculosis, but it was a good tonic drink.

Himmler's concern for the health of the SS was not limited to his obsessive attention to medical examinations. He also showed an interest in nutrition. When, in 1942, the food inspector of the Waffen-SS units, Sturmbannführer Ernst Günther Schenk, compiled a memorandum on improving the nutrition of soldiers, Himmler, after studying it, made many (as it seemed "important") amendments. With characteristic punctuality, he argued that crackers were of great importance for stomach patients. Further, he gave scope for their fantasies. He said that in the conditions of being in the swamps, the soldiers did not have the opportunity to fry pieces of bread on a fire, and therefore ready-made crackers should have been included in their diet. After the end of the war, Heinrich Himmler planned to create a special food program for the SS, which would take into account only certain products. "We should buy only those products that can affect our appearance. These are pome fruits, nuts, which are essential

body in winter in unlimited quantities. Also mineral water from natural sources, fruit juices, oatmeal, vegetable oil to be used for cooking. It will be necessary by all means to avoid overeating, which in the Middle Ages was promoted by the church, which called for fasting. We must avoid over-consumption of food throughout the Reich. Our task is to promote the creation of several bakeries in residential areas that would be linked to local mills. In general, Himmler intended to accustom the SS to "our natural food." Over time, this practice was to be extended to "national-political educational institutions, to barracks, to cadet schools, to community houses, to the structures of the "Source of Life", so that in the future young people would know nothing else but a healthy diet." Gradually, the Reichsfuehrer SS planned to limit the consumption of meat products.

If the appeals and exhortations resorted to by Himmler turned out to be an insufficiently effective means of educating the leadership of the SS, then he could apply more stringent measures. In addition to the prohibition on the use of alcohol and forced treatment, the practice of sending to the front line was practiced. In addition, Himmler could forbid SS officers to smoke or participate in hunting. A peculiar system of punishments was even developed, which was supposed to help end conflicts between individual SS officers. In May 1944, Himmler told SS-Obergruppenführer Arthur Phleps: "I have always acted in such a way as to fundamentally change the position of two arguing people ... Even if there was no dispute, I never transfer subordinates to new bosses." In 1938, he gave a specific example at one of the meetings:

"The two Oberfuehrers argued endlessly and could not come to a concrete decision. I allowed them to talk, after which I placed my office at their disposal. There was a bottle of water and two glasses. They could stay there from 8 o'clock in the morning until 8 o'clock in the evening, but by the end of the working day they were obliged to find a solution acceptable to both. In the future, I will continue to do so on a case-by-case basis."

This practice has expanded over time. In 1942, the SS Guidebooks published an article entitled "A reason to speak out. Order of the Reichsfuehrer SS on comradeship. It told about two SS leaders who were in conflict with each other, whom Himmler settled in the same room for six weeks. The editors of the SS Guidebooks commented on this decision as follows: "The Reichsfuehrer SS will consider each penalty in detail. He studies the nature of the conflict, and then comes up with

"witty" punishment that can put an end to disputes.

"Witty" punishments were very characteristic of Heinrich Himmler. At the same time (albeit not very brightly), his tendency to sophisticated sadism was manifested. For example, in October 1942

The Reichsfuehrer sent an order to all commanders of the Waffen-SS and police units, in which he recalled the need to actively deal with the problems of the food supply of the units: "Commanders who violate this order will learn on their own skin how poor food supply affects the combat readiness of units and moods, reigning in them. At the same time, they will learn how to make this supply better. I will send these commanders to the "bad food house" specially created on my orders.

supplies." There they will spend long enough to understand what it is like for subordinates who are fed disgusting food. Indeed, Himmler personally drew up the detailed plan for the "poor food house" that was being created in the Waffen-SS training kitchen at Oranienburg. The stay in this "house" was to last about four weeks. It was strictly forbidden to leave the building. In his plan, Himmler wrote: "Participants in the educational course, which is held in a house of poor food supply, during their stay in it should receive disgusting food in insufficient quantities." The following criteria were applied to "disgusting food": monotonous, poorly prepared, consisting only of canned food and no fresh vegetables.

At the end of the war, Himmler gave birth to a new idea. He suggested creating a special "mosquito room". The offending SS and police officers were supposed to be placed in it. A particular cynicism was that they, bitten by hundreds of mosquitoes, had to write reports on the following topics: "The fly as a vector of diseases", "Why do we need mosquito nets", etc. "Mosquito Room" was conceived only as one of the rooms special "educational home".

Chapter 18

"The SS is a soldier's, National Socialist order of Nordic men who swore allegiance to their families ... The bride, a woman, according to our laws, belongs to this community, to this order to the same extent as a man ... For us, it should be one thing is very clear: it would be pointless on one side to collect good blood from different parts of Germany, concentrate it in one place, and then allow its representatives to marry each other.

friend, and on the other side let families live as they want. We must painstakingly select the ruling stratum for centuries to come, the new aristocracy, which will be constantly replenished with the best sons and daughters of our people. It will be an aristocracy that will never decrepit, which will be renewed again through our past and traditions, will appear to our people forever young. Heinrich Himmler said these words in 1937. By that time, he had already completely distanced himself from the ideas of "male unions", preferring to focus on such a concept as "clan". Back in 1935, Himmler received from Hitler's agreement in principle that the SS should not be formed from children who were born in SS families, but from the children of ordinary German parents. In this regard, Heinrich Himmler himself considered himself not just the leader of the order, but the creator of a new "racial community", a theorist and practitioner of tribal relations. Probably, family life was the very area in which the Reichsfuehrer SS was most willing to interfere.

The first attempts at this were made even before the National Socialists came to power. On December 31, 1931, Himmler, in order to further develop the SS and form a special mentality among the SS men, issued the "Order of engagement and marriage." He demanded that from January 1, 1932, the still unmarried SS men receive special permission from him to marry. Future spouses had to prove their racial and biological significance, for which special examinations were carried out, and the pedigree of the bride and groom was compiled. If it was established that the bride did not have "sufficient racial suitability", and the SS man, despite the lack of permission from the Reichsfuehrer SS, nevertheless married her, then he was automatically excluded from the security detachments. Thus, the so-called tribal community of the SS was to be created, which consisted of

"high quality" (racially speaking) women and men. Such conditions were supposed to be the key to the appearance in SS families of "racially healthy" and "pedigreed" offspring.

This document itself, as it were, consisted of ten points. Ten short sentences described the "new creed" of the SS, a "new order" based on racial principles.

"1. The SS is an alliance of Germans of the Nordic type, selected according to special criteria.

2. In accordance with the National Socialist worldview and realizing that the basis of the future of our people is the selection and preservation of racially pure and hereditarily healthy blood, I introduce for all unmarried members of the SS, starting with 1 January 1932, the procedure for obtaining official permission to marry.

3. The ultimate goal is a hereditarily healthy, full-fledged genus of the German, Nordic type.

4. Permission to marry is given or not only once and only according to the criteria of racial purity and hereditary health.

5. Every SS man who intends to marry must obtain official permission from the Reichsführer SS for this marriage.

6. Members of the SS who have ignored the refusal of official permission for their marriage are excluded from the ranks of the SS.

7. The task of properly considering applications for marriage is entrusted to the Racial Office of the SS.

8. The Racial Administration of the SS maintains a special "SS Genealogy Book", which contains data on the families of SS members

after they have received official permission for their marriage, or after they have approved their application to include their family information in this book.

9. The Reichsführer SS, the head of the Racial Office and the employees of this office undertake, on their honor, not to disclose the information they receive.

10. It is an indisputable truth for the SS that a step of great importance has been taken with the issuance of this order. Therefore, we are inaccessible to ridicule, mockery and misunderstanding. The future is ours!"

It was from the moment this order appeared that the Racial Directorate of the SS began its activities, which then turned into the Directorate for Race and Settlements, and in 1935 acquired the status of the Main Directorate of the SS. The created structure came into being at the same time that the "Order on engagement and marriage" was issued on December 31, 1931. In this regard, the following fact seems interesting. As is known, Himmler maintained close ties with the Artamanen union, which, back in 1927, in its structure allocated the Directorate of Racial Studies, which, when selecting future members of the union, relied on the ideas of Hans Günther set forth in The Racial Studies of the German People. Long before the Nazis came to power, the Artamanen leadership required its members to provide evidence of Aryan origin, up to the third generation. It goes without saying that Himmler borrowed a lot of the new ideology and structure of the SS from this racist organization.

The "Marriage Order" and the birth of the SS Racial Office were by no means the product of the fantasies of the former farmer Heinrich Himmler. They clearly imprinted the ideas set forth in the books of one of the first

ideologues of the SS, who later became the imperial leader of the peasantry, Richard Walter Darre. Darre, simultaneously with all these posts, held the position of head of the Racial Directorate of the SS. In his program work "The New Nobility from Blood and Soil", which appeared

born in 1930, Darre made an attempt to develop the ideas set forth in the previous book, *The Peasantry as the Vital Source of the Nordic Race*. These ideas were to be embodied in the coming Third Reich, which was (as a new form of statehood) to carry out educational work to create a new "noble" stratum, which was to be formed in the bowels of the German peasantry.

The very work of Darre was saturated with the ideas of the racial researcher and "prophet" of the "Nordic movement" Hans Friedrich Karl Günther. This famous publicist was born in 1891. For a long time he was a student of the biologist and geneticist Eugene Fisher. In 1930 he taught at the University of Jena, and from 1935 he headed the department of race, biology of peoples and rural sociology at the University of Berlin. From 1940 to 1945 he taught as a professor of racial science at the University of Freiburg. It was from him at one time that Darre borrowed the idea of "improving the breed", which was transferred from the sphere of animal husbandry to human society. Do not forget that it was at the suggestion of Günther that Darre proclaimed the need for "improvement of the German people" on a racial basis. It was from Günther that the idea of "reproductive matrimonial courts" was borrowed, which were to serve as the basis for the selection of a wife in full accordance with racial criteria. This was the only way to ensure the flow of "good blood" to the "peasant nobility". Girls who reached marriageable age were divided by year of birth into evaluation groups that corresponded to their "racial significance". Except that

Darre was an activist in the Northern Ring movement, THEN these convoluted ideas are interesting for two reasons. On the one hand, Darre's works were published in the early 1930s in large numbers and were popular not only among the National Socialists. Many of the future SS officers formed their racist ideas precisely on the basis of Darre's books. On the other hand, the creative project outlined in these works for the cultivation of a "new peasant nobility" was implemented with precision. In 1932, Darre's work became a kind of ideological constitution for the SS. This is evidenced at least by such facts as the formation of separate groups that correspond to "racial values", the choice of a spouse according to racial theories, the formation of a professional group of specialists on racial issues who were supposed to coordinate the work on the implementation of this project. This conclusion is supported by the personal remarks of Heinrich Himmler.

In terms of circulation, Darre's work was second only to Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and Rosenberg's *Myth of the 20th Century*. For example, by 1938 *The Peasantry as the Vital Source of the Nordic Race* had been reprinted eight times.

Darre saw in German women, first of all, "producers" of healthy offspring, while the main criterion for men was their activity. Both those and others would have to correspond to the "Nordic models". He wrote: "At the same time, both the idea of productivity and the idea of racial education could, in a very simple and, no doubt, viable form, grow into our national existence." When classifying girls for marriageable age, Darre distinguished four "classes" that met certain racial criteria. Later, this idea was carried out in

life as SS racial experts; except that they distinguished not "classes" but "estimated racial groups."

According to Darre's ideas, no more than 10% of the girls of each year of birth could get into the first "class", a group of racial elite. The second group could be characterized as the most numerous - girls with "good indicators" were enrolled in it.

Only representatives of these first two groups could marry representatives of the "new peasant-noble class." The girls who fell into the third and fourth groups were "racially undesirable" - the state had to do everything possible so that these girls did not have children. In principle, the girls of the GU group should not have been given permission to marry. Persons from group III, if they still wanted to go out

married, had to undergo preliminary sterilization. It can be seen from the above system that it was intended not only for the selection of the elite (the SS and the "new peasantry"), the HO, and for the "culling of foreign elements", which immediately implied its widespread use.

Darre had a fairly clear idea even about the specialists who would have to carry out the distribution of girls into "classes", be responsible for choosing from among the "new aristocrats". The center of such activity should have been special stations, where special employees would work. They, together with judges, imperial, regional and local structures, were to deal with all issues related to "the hereditary material of our people." It was also planned to work closely with doctors who were supposed to keep special records, which ultimately

would lead to "an inventory of the nation on the basis of a systematic study of the pedigree of each of the Germans." Later, for these purposes, punched cards were used in the SS, which were sorted by the corresponding machines. It was one of the first forms of mass processing statistical data.

What was depicted in the book as a "racial utopia" turned out to be more or less close to the realities of the Third Reich. Jews and "Jewish mestizos", "asocial personalities" and "suffering from hereditary diseases" were entered in special card indexes created at the initiative of the National Socialist leadership. All this information was collected and processed by the most modern methods at that time. Within the SS, within a few years, a system of "tribal guardianship" and special "tribal institutions" arose. The tribal administration, which arose in 1932 as one of the departments of the Racial Administration of the SS, kept a family file of all members of the SS, and in 1938 also collected information about Jews. The racial experts of the SS also planned an "ethnic inventory" of the population of the Third Reich.

At the same time, on September 29, 1939, the Imperial Law "On the Inherited Peasant Household" was adopted, which was initiated personally by Darre, as Reich Minister of Agriculture. This law provided for the possibility of turning many peasant farms into so-called peasant inheritable households. This was undertaken in order to strengthen the peasant class as the "basis of society" and at the same time obtain a quantitative growth of medium-sized peasant enterprises. The new law prevented the possibility of dividing rural households between the children of the deceased owner. From now on, full inheritance through the male line was introduced to the eldest of the family. At the same time, the Law pursued the goal of preserving the "pure blood of the German peasantry." That,

who received the inheritance could not have "impurities" of Jewish blood, that is, only a purebred German could be a full-fledged peasant.

The adopted document was more of an idealized declaration than a workable law. Take, for example, the requirement for the owner of a "peasant hereditary household" - the provision of his pedigree up to January 1, 1800. Such requirements were usually made only for men who wanted to join the SS. Nazi propaganda greatly exaggerated the positive results of this Law. In many ways, he did not justify the peasant aspirations. Kibbles of protests very quickly accumulated in the Ministry of Agriculture against the possibility of transforming peasant farms into "inherited households", complaints about the dogmatic regulation of the order of inheritance. All these innovations further increased the outflow of peasants from the countryside. However, the law successfully contributed to inciting anti-Semitic sentiments in the countryside.

Despite his activity, Walter Darre did not personally participate in the preparation of the "Marriage Order". To develop this issue, he turned at the end of 1931 to an expert in the field of practical selection, Reichswehr officer Horst Rechenbach, who was appointed his deputy. Rechenbach was listed in the agrarian-political apparatus of the party and was an old acquaintance of Himmler and Darre. They all met back in Artamany. This National Socialist has always shown an increased interest in settlement projects, which was the second

the scope of the newly created Racial Administration of the SS. In the early thirties, Rechenbach, while still in the Reichswehr, was busy in Stuttgart training recruits, among whom he conducted an anthropological examination. This fact is of particular importance, since it was Rechenbach who developed the selection scheme for evaluation.

selection of recruits, which took into account numerous racial and anthropological criteria: 1) "estimation of physique", 2) "racial affiliation", 3) "military spirit and general condition, general appearance", etc. Later, after the National Socialists came to power, these three criteria will form the basis of the "racial cards" that were filled out for candidates who joined the SS.

After Darre invited him to the Racial Office of the SS, Rechenbach urgently asked for his resignation from military service. Openly, he cited as justification for this decision Himmler and Darre's invitation to "collaborate in the implementation of population work", in which he was to be in charge of issues of hereditary and racial hygiene. However, in fact, only after the intervention of Himmler, the Reichswehr was ready to withdraw a valuable officer into the reserve. For this reason, practical work in the Racial Administration of the SS began only at the end of the summer of 1932. Along with Darre and Rechenbach, the Munich scientist Bruno Kurt Schulz, who dealt with racial and anthropological problems, was involved in the creation of the Racial Administration. It was he who, back in 1931, prepared the draft "Order on Marriage", after which he was invited by Darre to the new SS structure, in which he became the head of the department of racial studies. Thus, the main structural components of the Racial Administration of the SS emerged only by 1932, almost all the work of this unit took place in Munich. In 1933, the structure headed by Darre was named the Race and Settlement Authority. It, as before, was headed by Richard Walter Darre. Rechenbach was appointed his deputy and expert in practical selection, and Bruno Kurt Schulz was in charge of racial and SS education. In general, the very first attempts to build the internal structure of the Racial Administration

The CCs were undertaken in a letter that Schultz wrote to Darra on January 16, 1932.

Despite the fact that the "Order of Engagement and Marriage" was signed at the end of 1931, its implementation began somewhere in late 1934-mid-1935. Already in 1934, there were 14,694 couples who applied to the leadership of the SS for permission to get engaged, and subsequently get married. In 1935, their number reached 16,691. The pedigree of the bride and groom traced back to 1800, as well as several questionnaires, to which several photographs were necessarily attached, had to be attached to the application for the proposed engagement. It was on the basis of these documents that the specialists of the Office of Race and Settlements established the "racial value" of the newlyweds, paying increased attention primarily to the bride. All these papers also had to be accompanied by handwritten biographies of the newlyweds, hereditary health sheets and medical questionnaires, which were filled out by special SS doctors. Along with these forms, it was necessary to bring the statements of the two guarantors of the bride about her personal qualities and abilities as a housewife. The groom personally submitted all this pile of papers to the Office of Race and Settlements, where they were considered first in the racial department, and then in the settlements department (later they became departments within RUSHHA). Officially, the decision to issue a marriage license was issued by the Reichsfuehrer SS, but when the number of those wishing to marry became gigantic, they received this permission directly from RUSHHA, almost immediately after considering the relevant documents. Documents were sent to Himmler only in cases where the racial experts refused to issue a marriage license, that is, the Reichsfuehrer SS had to make a final decision on this issue.

Himmler himself insisted to Ha TOM that the documents had to be submitted before the engagement, that is, the SS leadership had to issue permission not only for the wedding, but also for the engagement. But in practice it turned out that it was extremely difficult to implement this requirement. Despite the fact that the conclusion of the engagement without proper permission was punishable by certain sanctions, for many years de facto most SS men applied for permission after the engagement. Himmler was not satisfied with this situation. It is significant that Himmler later

on his own initiative created several more barriers to marriage. He established that the groom should not have been under 25 years of age. In addition, the SS leadership was to receive information about the financial and property status of the bride and groom. An order to this effect was issued on June 6, 1935.

| On August 1936, another document was added to this list - the bride had to provide a certificate stating that she had been trained in courses for expectant mothers. In the same year, 1936, it was established that senior SS officers had to trace the pedigree not to 1800, but to 1750, an exception was not made even for party veterans of the "era of struggle" period, who eventually rose up the ranks in the SS.

The passage of this whole long procedure was associated not only with bureaucratic wire, but also with significant financial costs. So, for example, only to clarify the pedigree had to resort to the services of a genealogist. Significant financial costs were also assumed in the preparation of other documents.

As expected, the processing of permit requests took a very long time. Under these conditions there was no

surprising that the SS leadership received many complaints against specialists from the Office of Race and Settlement. But, despite all these complaints, Heinrich Himmler was adamant: SS racial experts had to check the newlyweds with the utmost care. A similar situation could be observed during the years of the Second World War, although during this period the requirements for documents and the deadline for their passage became more "liberal". When those eager to marry tried to ask to speed up the process of consideration of their documents, then, as a rule, they heard in response references to the Reichsfuehrer SS, high-flown phrases that "the SS must bear personal responsibility for the future of the people and the state." One got the impression that it was not about choosing a future wife, not about personal happiness, but about fulfilling an important political task. However, this was not an exaggeration, because Himmler and Darre considered marriage only from the point of view of the reproduction of valuable "hereditary material."

The possibility of exclusion from the SS in the event that an SS man chose a "racially undesirable" bride as his wife did not exist only on paper. This norm was widely used especially often in the prewar years. A mild form of this punishment was the so-called permission to marry under one's own responsibility, which was a kind of civil marriage, that is, the family did not formally exist, and the spouses did not have the right to have children. But, as a rule, a more stringent form was used, which provided for expulsion from the SS if the man refused to terminate the engagement. It is worth noting that along with the "racially undesirable qualities" of the bride, the reason for the ban on marriage could be her infertility. The precedent for this was the case of Wilhelm K., who in July 1935 refused to break off the engagement with a barren girl, for which he was personally expelled from the SS.

Himmler. According to the logic of the SS leadership, a barren wife kept her husband from fulfilling his "demographic obligations" to replenish the racial and hereditary fund of Germany. How much the family and offspring were a significant component in the ideology of the SS, shows Himmler's phrase, uttered by him immediately after the outbreak of World War II. In it, he spoke about the order, which became known as the "Order of Conception." Himmler emphasized that with the outbreak of war, each of the members of the SS should consider it his duty to take care of the establishment of numerous offspring, which was supposed to be the key to a sufficient replenishment of "good blood".

However, not only the SS man who was preparing to marry had to provide his pedigree. Racial examination of all candidates for entry into the SS, as mentioned above, began to be prepared as early as 1932. It became a permanent practice only in 1933, after Hitler came to power. The one who became a member of the SS before 1933 had to provide the Racial Administration with the notorious "evidence of Aryan origin and hereditary

health", as well as a pedigree before 1800. If an SS man did not meet the racial criteria, or if his ancestors were not Aryans, then he was recognized as "racially unfit" and automatically excluded from the SS. Himmler tried, for political reasons, to keep the number of such incidents a closely guarded secret.

When new members were admitted to the SS, the referents on racial issues approached them with criteria that were once developed by Rechenbach. First, they described and recorded the external characteristics of the candidate's physique. It was evaluated on a nine-point system, where one corresponded to "perfect addition", and nine - "deformed". Then a "racial score" was given.

Here, one was assigned to candidates of a "purely Nordic type", and a five was assigned to "non-European types with possible admixtures of other racial species." The intermediate groups included people who, according to Gunther's theory, were representatives of the Dinaric, East Baltic and other races. In the final conclusion, the applicant was given a final score, where the highest score was assigned to men "intended exclusively for the SS", and the lowest - "not capable of being German soldiers." The final decision was made on the basis of this assessment and a brief test of athletic and intellectual capabilities. An applicant could only become a member of the SS if he received at least an AS rating, that is, "generally fit for service in the SS." At the same time, his physique had to be at least "satisfactory", and in racial terms, the presence of admixtures of the Falian, Western or Dinaric races was allowed. As an example, the following conclusion can be cited: "Müller, Hans, 17 years old, 4 brothers and sisters, 176.5 cm, 6 BAS / 7 VI AP." If you decipher this entry, then it means that the applicant for joining the SS, Hans Müller, according to external criteria, had a "good physique", he had a predominantly Nordic type with admixtures of the Falian race. Based on these indications, it was determined that the applicant was "generally suitable for service in the SS." However, in some cases deviations from the generally accepted rules could be made. This concerned, first of all, admission to the SD, when the requirements for the physical qualities of the applicant (height, myopia, physical strength) were significantly softened. If the applicant did not meet the racial criteria, then in this case the decision was made personally by Himmler. This practice predetermined the fact that in June 1936, RUSHHA developed new selection criteria for admission to the SD.

If an applicant for entry into the SS was considered unsuitable for racial reasons, then he was not informed of this, simply stating,

that OH is unfit for service in the SS. At the very beginning of the selection, those who belonged to the fourth and fifth racial groups ("mestizo", "eastern, eastern Baltic type", "non-European origin") were swept aside. In order to guarantee a good racially progeny among the SS, specialists from the Office of Race and Settlements began to conduct a systematic examination of members of the Hitler Youth and students of Napolas (National Political Educational Institutions), which were considered elite educational institutions of the Third Reich. Ideal applicants were invited for further education in the SS cadet schools. Examination of Napolas students by RUSHA specialists began in 1936. In his letter dated June 12, 1936, the Imperial Minister of Education B. Rust reported on promising and successful cooperation with referents from the Main Directorate for Race and Settlements.

After the selection on racial grounds during the examination for entry into the SS became the most important criterion, green and red "cards" were introduced into practice. The first were issued to those who were suitable for service in the SS, the second to those who were "rejected". Himmler's order of December 22, 1939 put into circulation a special "SS racial card", which was based on the same selection criteria. It was a sheet on which graphs were entered in a standard form, allowing you to make marks on 21 external signs. Later, this form of the map was used in racial surveys of the Volksdeutsche and the non-German population of the conquered territories.

The policy of the SS leadership on racial selection and the issuance of marriage licenses, on the one hand, indicates that the SS was planned as the biological nucleus of the German people, and on the other hand, said that private life

members of the SS turned into a political mission. At the moment, the federal archives of Germany contain somewhere around 240,000 marriage licenses issued to SS men. According to RUSHHA statistics, by 1941 more than 100,000 such permits had been issued. Over time, such requirements began to be presented not only to the SS, but also to employees of the Waffen-SS, as of 1942, and to police officers (although this procedure was not mandatory for policemen). Information about such socio-political practices allows us to answer the question why the racial experts of the SS were so adamant in the occupied territories when they examined the civilian population. The fact is that they were convinced of the correctness of such selection, since they believed that they had experienced its "truth" on their own body.

Despite the fact that the issuance of marriage licenses was the functional responsibility of the employees of the SS Main Office for Race and Settlement, Heinrich Himmler never denied himself the "pleasure" to intervene in this process. He used every opportunity to intrude again and again into the personal relationships of people. By and large, his painful reaction to the problem of gender relations spoke a lot about the state of marriage of Heinrich Himmler himself. There are many examples of how the Reichsfuehrer SS made decisions regarding the issuance of permission for the marriage of this and that SS man. With the outbreak of World War II, the number of SS employees who wanted to marry representatives of other nations increased. In August 1940, Himmler considered the application of an SS officer who intended to marry a Czech woman who was classified by racial experts as a "representative of a good breed." For Himmler, the problem had an exclusively racial connotation. After that, the Reichsfuehrer SS wrote to Bach-Zelewski. "From a purely national point of view, it is necessary

oppose such a marriage, but from a racial point of view, the choice of an SS officer is absolutely correct, since he wanted to take a good, thoroughbred woman from the Czech people and decided to donate her Nordic blood to the German people. In this case, it was decided to issue permission to marry only on the condition that the bride would leave her hometown forever and move to the "old empire" (after 1939, the purely German territories of the Third Reich were usually called that).

But not in all cases, Himmler was so "supportive." For example, in 1942, he received a statement from one of the guards of the Dachau camp, who asked for permission to marry a certain Lucia B., who was the mother of his three children. Both of them came from Polish territories, which became a significant problem for marriage. Himmler believed that a marriage license could only be issued after Lucia and her children had passed the Germanization program, which was carried out by specialists from the SS Main Office for Race and Settlement. At the same time, Himmler immediately sent one of the Obersturmfuehrers of the Totenkopfuehrer division to the Eastern Front when he asked permission to marry "an attractive girl who came from a nationally conscious Czech family." In this case, the head of the SS did not see the "racial component" of the request. By the way, wishing to marry, any of the SS men risked incurring the wrath of Heinrich Himmler. There were a great many reasons for this: the bride's pregnancy, age difference (the chosen one was older than the groom), etc. If in 1923 Heinrich Himmler was able to upset the engagement of just one of his brothers, now he has the opportunity to control and determine the personal lives of hundreds and even thousands of people.

In addition to applications for marriage, Himmler constantly reviewed applications that were filed by SS employees for divorce. If by chance it was discovered that they behaved "ignobly" during the dissolution of the marriage, then this could turn into unpleasant consequences. One of the Obersturmfuehrer, who filed for divorce and a possible second marriage at the same time, was not only expelled from the SS, but was sent to the front in anti-aircraft

troops. Himmler considered such behavior to be "ignoble". In another case, an Oberscharführer from the same SS division filed for divorce twice. In both cases, it was found that he "treated his wife roughly and even cruelly." When he nevertheless received permission to enter into a third marriage, Himmler asked to bring to the attention of this SS Oberscharführer that "if he treats his wife cruelly for the third time, then I personally will have to intervene in the matter." Further, Himmler emphasized: "This time the case will end not with another divorce, but with many years of education, which will reduce his temper, teach him self-control and instill kindness in communicating with other people, which is so necessary in human society." In some cases, less aggressive behavior was enough for punishment. So, for example, the commandant of the women's concentration camp Lichtenburg Tamaschke was removed from his post, as rumors reached the Reichsführer SS that he "neglects his wife." However, excessive concern for his wife for Himmler was also a "sin". In 1937, he told the SS Gruppenführer: "I cannot understand how this or that Standartenführer or Oberführer can be a uniform henpecked. I never tire of repeating: officers who are not able to lead their small group, namely themselves and their spouses, can hardly be suitable for great deeds.

In general, Himmler's intervention in his personal life could take the most bizarre forms. So, for example, the highest leader of the SS and police in the Alpine region, Erwin Rösener, in April 1942 turned to Karl Wolf with a personal request. He asked to know how the Reichsführer SS would react to the fact that Resener filed for divorce a second time. The reason for the divorce was another illegitimate child. Himmler gave permission for a divorce and for another marriage, but after that he really began to interfere in Resener's personal life. Togo could be called to Berlin for several weeks only for Himmler to teach him the principles of family life. No less significant was the example of the 56-year-old SS Gruppenführer and Police Lieutenant General Herbert Becker. In 1943, Himmler asked Becker if his wife was prone to same-sex relationships (the perused letters aroused such suspicion). In response, Becker began to declare that "his marriage is based on the National Socialist principles of marital coexistence." After that, Himmler expressed the hope that Becker's family life would still lead to the birth of children.

If you look at the time when Himmler was actively engaged in the creation of an "ideal" model of gender relations, then it will fall on 1936-1937. It was in 1937 that Himmler delivered a speech to the SS Gruppenführers, which was devoted to the problem of increasing the birth rate. What did Himmler consider a threat to fertility? Already in 1937, he himself said that his conclusions were not based on the results of scientific research, but were based on his political experience, which he acquired when he only headed the German police in 1933-1934. The Reichsführer SS believed that fertility was primarily threatened by homosexuality and abortion. According to his calculations, there were about 1-2 million homosexuals in Germany, which was about 10% of men who

could have children. Homosexuals were eliminated from the process of reproduction of offspring. Himmler openly said that "if everything is left as it is, then our people will be spoiled by this epidemic."

The second threat to the future of the "Nordic Germanic race" lay in abortion. Himmler estimated that between 600,000 and 800,000 of them took place in Germany each year. He was depressed that every year Germany was missing several hundred thousand children. But what worried him more was that after an abortion, about 300,000 German women became infertile every year. In addition, according to his calculations, about 30-40 thousand women died during and after abortions every year. For him, these were "terrible, but sobering numbers."

As a result, Himmler blamed this unsatisfactory demographic condition on duplicitous Christian-bourgeois morality. It was this morality that he blamed for abortions, which were decided by pregnant girls who risked becoming single mothers. He emphasized that if a man has a mistress, then society turns a blind eye to this. "However, if a girl is prudent, follows the laws of nature and conceives a child, then society turns away

from her". The same society is outraged when a girl gives birth to this child out of wedlock. In a conversation with his personal physician, Himmler once delivered the following speech: "A characteristic expression of this double standard is the status that, according to the customs of the middle class, children born from such connections receive the name illegitimate. This definition implies that they are not related to their father and his family. In fact, the law says that a bastard and his father cannot be considered relatives. Nature is deprived of her rights only in order to preserve the appearance of decorum in a society where

dominated by the middle class. The father is deprived of the opportunity to do the most natural things in the world: treat the child as his own and engage in his upbringing. Legally, this is not his child, but the child of a woman who has nothing to do with him, except perhaps for the fact that the man gives her money. In addition, he cannot marry the mother of the child, as he is already married. If he lives with her, the law calls it concubinage, and the problems caused by outright scandal must be settled by the police. Information of this kind constantly comes to my people.

A person in such a situation is deprived of access to his child. He is again going against the law if he wants to adopt a child while he has children of his own, or at least the opportunity to have them. In other words, the law comes into direct conflict with our crying natural need - children, as many children as possible! We must show courage and act decisively in this matter, even if the church turns out to be even more opposed to us - a little more or a little less, it does not matter.

What were these laws of nature that girls had to follow, despite bourgeois morality? Himmler explained: after the onset of puberty (14-16 years), German boys and girls, due to living in a cold climate, had to refrain from sexual intercourse. However, by the age of 20, sexual instincts should have taken their toll. Young people could not abstain from sex for a long time. The girl had only two options in this regard: either she lived with a man and "remained healthy", or her sexual abstinence led to "hysteria". Himmler remarked: "If nature is so wise as to give a person the strongest instinct at the age of 15-16, then bourgeois morality, saying "This must be done at 30", cannot be smarter. But she

proclaims that it is unnatural!" Himmler believed that the laws of nature and bourgeois morality always diverged on fundamental points. In his opinion, in ancient times, the public opinion of the Germans and nature were in agreement with each other. Then extramarital sexual intercourse was not something shameful. Public attention paid attention to the fact that the boy and girl were representatives of the same race. Himmler intended to restore the supposedly ancient "Nordic blood law". Any sexual intercourse with a "racially inferior" partner was to be regarded in the National Socialist state as moral degradation.

Himmler thought that the Germans paid attention first of all to the appearance of new children, without taking into account whether they were born in wedlock or out of wedlock. So the Germans strengthened the power of their own people and race. The Reichsfuehrer SS suggested that these principles had been forgotten in the last 1000 years. National Socialism, and above all the SS, had to bring these "ancient laws" back to life. In 1936, Himmler solemnly declared to the SS elite: "I know for sure that we, as a people, will be invincible and immortal, we will truly be an Aryan-Nordic race if we select in accordance with the laws of blood, if we adhere to the cult of ancestors. Only in this way can we know the eternal cycle of being, all events and life itself on Earth. A nation that honors its ancestors should always bear children."

The defeat in the First World War should be the triumph of the Third Reich. We emphasize that Himmler welcomed early marriages. He preferred his SS men to marry not at 30 or 35, like most Germans, but at 24 or 25. However, marriage alone was not enough. In the "real"

the SS family had to have many children. Marriage without children for Himmler was "banal relationships."

As we understand, early marriage and many children were no longer a private affair of a young man and a girl. Himmler wanted his guard units to be a demographic example for all of Germany. He wanted to indirectly influence the increase in the birth rate and population growth. So he drew attention to the issue of abortion. In this matter, he wanted to establish the most stringent rules. Himmler intended to ban abortion at all costs. Although in May 1933 the rules for abortion were tightened, Himmler still remained dissatisfied. He wanted doctors and girls who had abortions to be prosecuted as criminals. He intended to offer another way to solve the problem, namely the protection of a single mother and her illegitimate child from a "hypocritical society." It was this message that caused the emergence of the SS organization "Source of Life" ("Lebensborn"). Despite numerous myths and conjectures, the formal reason for the emergence of the "Source of Life" was the fight against abortion and the promotion of extramarital birth. However, this issue was considered exclusively from the angle of racial politics. In 1936, Himmler made no secret of the fact that the negative selection initiated by National Socialism (forced sterilizations, restrictions on marriage, etc.) had to be supplemented by positive selection. Two years later, SS Standartenführer Dr. Ebner, the actual manager of the Lebensborn, saw the tasks of this institution as follows: "If the state removes hereditarily healthy people from the reproduction process, then on the other side we must contribute to the birth of hereditarily healthy children, carriers of valuable blood."

The problem of SS family planning is easier to explain if Himmler's personal life is taken into account. Although he continued to be true to his youthful habit of interfering with the personal lives of those close to him, he fundamentally changed the approach to premarital sexual relations and the birth of children outside of marriage. By this time, Himmler's family life itself had cracked. In the autumn of 1937, the Himmler family spent a relatively quiet holiday in Italy. However, it was at this time that Margareta Himmler began to keep a diary, if, of course, irritated notes can be called diary entries. Every line was literally saturated with deep discontent. It would seem that Margareta Himmler had no reason to be indignant. After the National Socialists came to power, Himmler began to cultivate a lifestyle that befitted the country's political elite. First, they move into a spacious Munich apartment, located on Mölyptrasse. In the autumn of 1934, the Himmlers leave it and move to Lake Tagensee, where Heinrich Himmler purchased the estate from the singer Alois Bergstoller. This estate was thoroughly rebuilt in 1937. In addition, the Himmler family has a house on the seashore, as well as a hunting lodge in the mountains. Over time, the couple acquired housing in Berlin. At first, Heinrich Himmler settled in a comfortable apartment on the Tiergratenstrasse. However, in November 1934 he moved to house number 22 on Hagenstrasse. The next time the Himmlers changed Berlin housing was already in 1937. They get a spacious house in a prestigious area of the imperial capital Dahlem. By and large, it was a city mansion with fourteen rooms. Since this house was declared as the service apartment of the Reichsfuehrer SS, he got it completely free of charge.

In the early years of their marriage, Margareta was proud of her husband's professional success. However, she complained endlessly that Heinrich Himmler was almost never at home. She begins to understand that success has its downside. On her tenth wedding anniversary, she will write in her diary: "I have a lot, however, in marriage itself I am still in need. Heinrich almost does not exist for me, he recognizes only work. The social status of the wife of the Reichsfuehrer SS was very high, but Margareta is becoming more and more unsociable every day. Gradually, her isolation turns into a kind of aggressive contempt, which she does not hesitate to demonstrate to the people around her. Disappointment embitters, and she takes her anger out on the staff. She constantly expresses dissatisfaction with the "impudent and lazy" couriers who almost constantly stayed at the Himmlers' house. In diary entries more and more often there are notes close to bitterness and rage:

"Why not put all these people under lockdown and work there until they die. Sometimes I wonder: do I live among people or not?"

Often, Himmler takes out Margaret's annoyance on his adopted son Gerhard, whose father was a dead SS man. Gerhard was a year older than Gudrun, the daughter of Heinrich and Margaret Himmler. In the diary of an embittered woman, the most ridiculous claims against the boy have been preserved. She calls him a "criminal" who allegedly stole the money, but continues to deny and "lie indescribably". She is also annoyed by the fact that the boy's own mother has not even made a single attempt to get her child back. In 1939, Gerhard was sent to study at the National Political Educational Institution (Napolas). As already mentioned, Napolas were educational institutions of an elite type. They were supervised by Himmler and the SS. For this reason, Napolas, as it were,

were natural competitors to the "Schools of Adolf Hitler", which were patronized by party structures and the "German Labor Front". The boy could not take root in any of these institutions, and therefore in October 1939 he left these walls.

Taking into account all this information, one can hardly say that the atmosphere in the family of Heinrich Himmler was peaceful. And at this time he met a young girl - Hedwig Potthast, who at the beginning of 1936 got a job with the Reichsführer SS as a secretary. The history of their love relationship was very long and complicated. Until 1938, the relationship between Himmler and Potthast was purely formal. Then there was mutual sympathy. However, a real love relationship between them began no earlier than 1940, that is, when they had known each other for several years.

Chapter 19

During a speech in February 1937, Heinrich Himmler told the SS Gruppenführer: "Sometimes in National Socialist circles we dreamed that we would conquer the whole world. We must mean it even when we don't talk about it. It is very clear to me that we have to do phased preparatory work. Today we do not have free men at our disposal to populate a province, zone or rural area equal to half of today's Germany. It is also very clear that we do not have enough population for this. If, however, we find ourselves the owners of areas in which non-German blood predominates, then we will, without doubt and regret, have to evict everyone, from old women to children.

We will have to bring a quality racial population there. At the same time, we must vigorously tackle

business to populate today's Germany with a hundred million German peasants. This is what will set us on the path of world domination. Then we can perceive the earth in Aryan

spirit."

Himmler actually created a "racial utopia", which was to be realized in stages. He first mentioned the hundred million German peasants needed for Germany in 1931. However, in 1937 this figure was voiced not as some kind of hypothetical prerequisite for the revival of Germany, but as a figure to which it was necessary to strive. This was the goal that the imperial population policy had to pursue for several generations of Germans. The tone of Himmler's speeches became more militant every year. In 1938, he directed the leadership of the SS and the police towards the approach of a "collision", a "fateful hour", "which for the next 30, 50, 100 years will predetermine the life of Germany and ourselves."

In November 1938, Himmler told the SS Gruppenführers that a military conflict was approaching, in which the confrontation would go not for life, but for death: "It should be extremely clear to all of us that in the next ten years we will go towards unheard of clashes. It will not be just a struggle of nations that will find themselves on opposite sides of the front. A

it will be an ideological struggle in which all Jews, Freemasons, Marxists and the clerical world will unite. In Jews, I see the driving force behind all the negative processes in our world. It is very clear to them that they are ready to wage war until Germany and Italy are destroyed. A simple conclusion follows from this. Jews have no place in Germany. It is only a matter of time ... You should understand that if we lose in the fight that has begun, then the Germans will not

there will even be reservations. They will be starved and destroyed. This will be the lot of everyone, regardless of whether he was an enthusiastic supporter of the Third Reich or not. For persecution, it will be enough that a person was born a German woman and speaks German".

However, already a few months later, in February 1939, Himmler spoke of the coming war not as an event possible in the coming decade. The war in his speech was a matter of the near future, which he associated with the consequences of the Jewish pogrom, better known in history as "Kristallnacht". "The radical solution of the Jewish problem pushes Judah to fight against us. If necessary, they are ready to unleash a new world war," said the Reichsfuehrer SS during a speech in Wiesbaden to the officers of the Rhein Oberabschnitt.

In a speech to the SS Gruppenfuehrers in November 1938, Himmler first characterized his "racial utopia", in fact, for the first time calling it the Greater German Empire. "In the future we will have Germany either in the form of a Greater German Empire, or there will be no Germany at all. I believe that if the security forces do their duty, the Führer will be able to create a Greater German Empire, a Greater German Reich. It will be the greatest empire that the history of mankind has ever known. It will be the greatest empire that has ever existed on Earth. In this destiny lies our duty and our work.

However, Himmler does not seem to have considered it possible that a Greater German Reich would be established during Adolf Hitler's lifetime. He implied that the "heir to the Fuhrrer" would do this. This becomes apparent if one accepts Himmler's pre-war remarks in 1939, in which he spoke of the need

the creation of a "ring of settlements" around Germany, in which "from 80 to 100 million German peasants" were to live. According to him, such a "peasant encirclement" was just a prerequisite for the implementation of titanic plans to reshape Europe. Himmler was well aware that the Third Reich did not have so many free peasants, and could hardly have in the next 30 years. For this reason, it can be assumed that Himmler considered the upcoming war only as the first stage of a "world conflict". Victory in it was to lay the foundation for the Greater German Reich, which was to emerge decades later.

The beginning of Himmler's activities to establish contacts with the German national minority in Eastern and Southeastern Europe dates back to 1936-1937. It was at this time that the Reichsführer SS began to actively intervene in "people's politics", as population events were often called. Himmler's first experience of such activity came in 1934, when the SD began to show an increased interest in the Sudeten Germans. The Sudetenland, which passed to Czechoslovakia after the First World War, became a springboard from which German agents monitored the activities of political emigrants who fled from the persecution of the National Socialists in this European country.

In some cases, SD agents were ready to carry out military actions. So, for example, in January 1935, the closest ally of Otto Strasser (at that time the main "National Socialist dissident") Rudolf Formis was killed. In late 1936, Himmler decided to participate in the "people's politics" of the regime himself. For this, he could rely on the Volksdeutsche Mediation Office. It should be noted that, starting from 1933, between individual representatives of the NSDAP there was

intensified struggle for control over activities carried out in the field of "people's politics". Largely for this reason, Hitler instructed his deputy Rudolf Hess to restore order in this area. Hess faced a difficult task - the unification of all organizations allied to the National Socialists that operated on the territory of neighboring European states did not seem appropriate, since in the early years of the National Socialist dictatorship Germany was actually in international isolation. A way out was found in 1935, when, on the orders of Hess, the Volksdeutsche Mediation Office was created, headed by Otto von Kursell. He was an artist who supported the National Socialists from the beginning of the 1920s, and in 1934 became an employee of the Ministry of Science. In 1936, Courcelle, who was, among other things, an SS Obersturmbannführer, went into conflict with Heinrich Himmler. The reason for the conflict lay in the fact that the SS leadership supported one of the most radical groups of the Sudeten Germans, which was in opposition to organizations that collaborated with the Mediation Office. Courcelle naively believed that he could control Himmler's activities in the Sudetenland, and therefore even tried to enlist the support of Hermann Goering. Himmler, in response, decided to remove Kursell from the leadership of the Volksdeutsche Mediation Office, for which only a convenient excuse was needed.

This occasion was quickly found. The fact is that Otto von Kursell was the head of the Baltic Brotherhood organization, which included many Baltic Germans who ended up in the Third Reich. The Baltic Brotherhood was accused of anti-state and Masonic activities, after which the organization was banned, and Courcelle himself was expelled from the SS and removed from all posts. So Himmler

managed to put the BO head of the Volksdeutsche Mediation Office, SS Obergruppenführer Werner Lorenz. Despite the fact that Lorenz was not strong in "people's politics", he had good connections, and was also friendly with Joachim von Ribbentrop, who in the second half of the 30s was considered "the hope of National Socialist foreign policy." Lorenz's deputy was appointed Herman Berends, who was the link with the SD. From the very beginning, it was Berends who was the actual head of the organization, since Lorenz was assigned more representative functions.

The new leadership of the Mediation Office did not prefer to cooperate with all German national organizations, but focused on foreign unions of the national socialist persuasion. Most actively this activity, supervised by the SS, unfolded in 1938. Berends focused his activities on contacts with the German national minority in several countries: Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, the Sudetenland. It should be noted right away that before the start of World War II, Himmler's influence on "people's politics" was indirect and did not have an official character. He preferred to rely on persons trusted to him who led the Mediation Office, especially since this organization had not yet been merged into the SS. Himmler's desire to determine "people's politics" was largely due to the formation of ideas that the SS was to play a central role in the process of "restoration of the Germanic race" from which the Greater German Reich was to emerge. In this regard, interaction with the German minority in the countries neighboring Germany was to be the beginning for the construction of the "peasant ring". In addition, the SS could act in crisis situations as a defense of the Volksdeutsche. Exactly

SS specialists were the real organizers of the "German self-defense" units that arose in the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia.

The reason that Himmler managed to intervene without any problems and then gain control over the "people's politics" of the Third Reich lay in his good relations with Joachim von Ribbentrop, who, on Hitler's orders, oversaw the activities of the Volksdeutsche Mediation Office. Himmler had known von Ribbentrop since the end of 1932, when negotiations were going on in his house on the formation of a government headed by Hitler. Moreover, in May 1933, Himmler promoted Ribbentrop to the SS Standartenführer (April 20, 1940 he was awarded

rank of SS-Obergruppenführer). Ribbentrop not only collaborated with the SD, but was also considered a personal friend of Himmler (as far as Himmler could be friends with representatives of the political elite of the Reich). On the eve of his appointment as Reich Foreign Minister, Ribbentrop and his wife arrived for an overnight visit at Himmler's house. In February 1939, Margaretha Himmler, who was vacationing with Ribbentrop in a sanatorium, described him in her diary as a "family friend".

In the course of trying to influence foreign policy, Heinrich Himmler tried to establish fruitful relations with representatives of neighboring countries. It was primarily about the states that took a "friendly" position in relation to the Third Reich. In the first place, without a doubt, was fascist Italy. On March 30, 1936, a German-Italian police conference took place in Berlin. The German side at the conference was officially represented by Himmler, Heydrich, Gestapo chief Müller. The head of the Italian delegation was the Minister of Police

Arturo Bocchini. The conference mainly discussed the problems of the struggle against the communists. In October of the same year, a German delegation led by Himmler made a return visit to Rome. On this occasion, the Reichsfuehrer SS was even received by Mussolini. Subsequently, "anti-communist" bilateral conferences were held by Himmler with representatives from Finland, Bulgaria, and Hungary. Contacts were established with the law enforcement agencies of Poland and Yugoslavia. In the last days of the summer of 1937, Himmler became the official face of the International Police Congress, which was attended by representatives of Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Finland, Greece, Italy, Yugoslavia, Holland, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, Hungary and Uruguay. The conference was closed. It was only brought to the attention of the German public that it was again devoted to the problems of the struggle against communism.

In the meantime, such a warm and close relationship developed between Heinrich Himmler and Arturo Bocchini that the chief of the Italian police invited the Reichsführer SS to spend his vacation in Italy. However, it was supposed to be not just a vacation, but an attempt to combine it with the solution of business issues. Himmler was not immediately able to get out for a few weeks in Italy. The fact is that on November 9, he was supposed to take part in the celebrations that have become traditional for Munich, dedicated to the next anniversary of the "beer putsch". Only then was he able to head south with his wife.

By and large, this was the only trip abroad in which Heinrich and Margaret Himmler were together. As mentioned above, it was at this time that Margaret began to keep a diary. From this diary you can find out the details of Himmler's stay in Italy. They arrived in Rome in a luxurious car on November 14, 1937. Met them in person

Bocchini. Over the following days, the Himmler couple visited Roman sights: the Colosseum, the Roman Forum, the Capitol. Himmler, who had considerable knowledge of history, was able to surprise the Italians. The couple also visited the Vatican. Here, Heinrich Himmler managed to win a small "triumph" over Catholicism - he was allowed to drive through the streets of the Vatican in a car with an SS flag installed on it:

On November 17, Naples was expecting high-ranking guests. At this time, Himmler again began to worry about severe pain in the stomach. The next day, during a visit to Pompeii, he paid great attention to the mosaic floors on which the swastika ornaments were laid out. Margaretha Himmler preferred to study the people and the country in a slightly contemptuous way. In those days, she wrote in her diary: "In Italy, great importance is attached to good cuisine ... Despite the fact that everyone constantly drinks wine, drunks are nowhere to be seen. There are a lot of kids running around everywhere." The Himmlers continued to tour Naples, accompanied by the historian Eugen Dollmann, a German by birth who had lived in Italy since 1928. In 1937, he constantly participated in excursion trips as an interpreter who accompanied the National Socialist delegations. In addition to the Himmlers, he accompanied the imperial youth leader Baldur von Schirach. During a meeting with Himmler, Dollmann

volunteered to report on everything that happened in Italy. This he carefully did over the following years.

One of the main results of the tourist trip, which lasted until December 13, was that Himmler paid close attention to the ancient cultural heritage. Without waiting for his return to Berlin, on December 10, 1937, Himmler sent a letter to the scientific curator research

Society "Heritage of the Ancestors" to Walter Wüst. He had to look for "Germanic" traces in Italian culture. Himmler was prompted to this idea by the swastika ornaments and signs he saw, which were very reminiscent of runes. Walter Wüst had to urgently create a department in the "Heritage of the Ancestors" that would study the culture of ancient Rome and Greece in order to search for "Germanic-Nordic echoes" in it.

The diary of Margarethe Himmler gives many interesting entries, which were dated March 1938. One day she wrote: "We are not left with worries, every day something new happens. Heinrich is in a good mood, as he, of course, knows what is happening. But I can only observe his incredible activity and pack the field uniform. It's very hard". In fact, Himmler began to show "incredible activity" as early as January 1938, when the mobilization of 20,000 policemen was announced. It was proclaimed that this was done either to prepare for the "parade", or before the start of the "big exercises". In fact, the Third Reich was preparing for the annexation of Austria. On March 12, motorized police units, assembled from all over the Reich, with the support of Wehrmacht units, crossed the German-Austrian border. The Anschluss of Austria in those days was preferred to be called the "flower campaign", as the Austrians greeted the Germans with bouquets of flowers. The accession of Austria to the Third Reich became possible only when, after a long crisis, the Austrian Chancellor Schusching gave his post to the leader of the Austrian National Socialists Arthur Seyss-Inquart. He immediately asked the Third Reich "to help with the maintenance of order."

There is one little-known fact regarding the Anschluss of Austria. It turns out that Heinrich Himmler arrived in Vienna in the early morning of 12

March 1938, even before the moment when the German units occupied this city. Moreover, in a special edition of the German Police, readers were informed that "the Reichsfuehrer SS landed suddenly for many in the vicinity of Vienna at the Aspern airfield, when not a single German formation had yet crossed the border. He was accompanied by Gruppenführer Heydrich. It was they who became the organizing force of the first measures to maintain order and tranquility. It was they who became the first official representatives of the National Socialist Reich on Austrian soil. The article went on to say, with considerable pathos, that "SS Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler led the most significant revolution in world history, which took place without a single shot and any bloodshed!" It would seem that Himmler should have been flattered by such articles, but he remained dissatisfied. The fact is that the article in the German Police magazine was published with the knowledge of the Imperial Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels and briefly outlined information about the preparations for the Anschluss, which were considered secret. Himmler took this as a personal flaw.

If for Hitler his stay in the Austrian capital was associated with not the best "Viennese period" in his life, then Himmler linked his early arrival with several other events. He seemed to be trying to rehabilitate himself for the failed putsch of 1934, in which the Austrian SS men took an active part. In one of his statements, he said: "Eight hundred SS officers will defend the government of Seyss-Inquart in the residence of the Federal Chancellor from the red bandits." From Vienna, Himmler traveled with Seyss-Inquart to Linz, where they arrived around noon. They were supposed to meet Hitler here, who went to the Eastern Mark (as the National Socialists called Austria) to welcome "reunification with their homeland." March 14 Himmler and Sepp Dietrich, together with

units of the "Leibstandarte" and the German police arrived in Vienna. The next day, Hitler arrived here, who took part in a rally that gathered a gigantic crowd of several tens of thousands of people. After that, everyday work for Himmler began again - he had to unify the Austrian police according to the German model and pour the police apparatus into the "security state corps".

Six months later, units of the Rapid Response SS and four armed battalions of the "Dead Head" took part in the annexation of the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. After that, it was decided to expand the practice of creating parts of the SS. On November 8, 1938, Himmler, during a speech in Munich to the SS Gruppenfuehrers, stated that six more new battalions were needed to be formed in the near future. But in those days that was not what he cared about. After the transition to an open expansionist policy, the National Socialist regime intensified the persecution of the Jews. When the Anschluss of Austria took place, anti-Semitic riots arose in many cities. It was just a prelude to the big pogrom. Between May and July 1938, there was a growing wave of anti-Semitism throughout the Third Reich, which led to several excesses.

However, at that time, the National Socialist authorities decided in every possible way to restrain the "pogromist moods." The fact is that the "Sudet crisis" broke out, and therefore the Third Reich had to appear as a "peace-loving" state. When the so-called Munich agreement was reached (in Russian historiography - the Munich agreement) and the Sudetenland became part of the Third Reich, it no longer made sense to restrain radical moods. Against this growing anti-Semitic

On October 26, 1938, Himmler ordered the expulsion of all Polish Jews from the country within three days. Further events began to develop with unpredictable speed. On November 7, 1938, 17-year-old Herschel Grishpan made an attempt on the life of Ernst Pata, secretary of the German embassy in Paris. This attempt was presented as an act of retribution for the deportation of Grishpan's parents from the Reich. When information about this leaked into the Reich, it immediately began to arise pockets of unrest. On the night of November 7-8, 1938, several shop windows owned by Jews were smashed in Hesse.

In the meantime, on November 8, Himmler delivered the speech quoted above in which he drew the attention of the SS Gruppenfuehrers to the "Jewish question". The reason for this event was the traditional celebrations dedicated to the unsuccessful "Munich Putsch" of 1923. It was on November 9 that it became known that Ernst Rath died from his wounds. In the afternoon the news arrived in Munich. At this time, the "old fighters of the movement" were in the town hall building, where they listened to Hitler's speech. At the same time, the death of Rath was officially announced. Hitler promptly left the event, after which the floor was taken by Goebbels, who began in every possible way to incite those present to anti-Semitic antics.

At this time, Himmler was also in the town hall building. After Goebbels' speech, he did not give any special instructions. In any case, the police did not stop the wave of pogroms, in which some of the SS took part. The fact that the country was engulfed in anti-Semitic riots, Himmler learned in the evening, while in Hitler's Munich apartment. After that, he gave the order to prepare the concentration camps to accept 20-30 thousand new prisoners. During the night he contacted Heydrich and gave some instructions. In particular, the police had to ensure that the fire from the set fire to the synagogues

did not spread to neighboring houses, and the pogromists did not accidentally rob "Aryan" shops. It was believed that officially 91 people died during the pogroms. However, attention is drawn to the very large number of "suicides" that were "observed" among the thousands of arrested Jews.

Meanwhile, the Third Reich continued its territorial expansion. After Czechoslovakia lost the Sudetenland, Slovakia withdrew from it, which declared

willingness to take a "friendly stance" towards Germany. Under these conditions, the government of Czechoslovakia, which was bursting at the seams, decided to transfer control of the country to Hitler.

In early April 1939, the daughter of the Reichsführer SS Gudrun received a letter from her father's adjutant, Karl Wolf. It said: "Darling doll! I am writing this letter so that it will pass over time to your grandchildren and great-grandchildren as an invaluable document. Wolf went on to describe as an eyewitness Hitler's arrival in Prague, where he met Heinrich Himmler in the royal palace. The Führer hugged the head of the SS by the shoulders, after which he said: "Himmler, I rarely praise you, but here I have to say that everything was done with the utmost elegance." By "elegance" Hitler meant the actions of the SS units, which freely occupied the territory of the Czech Republic. Two regiments of the order police and two operational groups of the security police were immediately sent here, which urgently began to carry out the operation "Grid". It was about the arrest of local communists and German political emigrants who had been hiding in Czechoslovakia for a long time. By the beginning of May 1939, only in the territory of the "protectorates of Moravia and Bohemia" (under this name the Czech Republic became part of the Third Reich), about 6 thousand people were arrested. The arrests continued for several more months, in fact, until the outbreak of World War II.

If we talk about the changes that took place in Himmler's priorities as the Third Reich carried out its territorial expansion, then it should be noted that until 1938 he did not actually pay much attention to the settlement program that the SS Main Office for Race and Settlements was trying to implement. In the period from 1935 to 1938, it was mainly about the creation of urban-type settlements, which were intended for employees of the SS and the police. Despite the fact that the SS Main Directorate for Race and Settlement was headed by the chief agrarian of the Third Reich, Richard Walter Darre, until 1938, in fact, no real activity was carried out to create "SS peasant settlements". So, for example, in 1937, 5,000 hectares were provided for 55 peasants who were related to the SS. Himmler did not dare to develop this direction, if only because he intended to leave behind the theme of the "Eastern Settlements", which he had been raving about since his youth. This did not prevent him, during his secret speech in January 1936, from saying that the future of German peasant settlements was connected with Eastern Europe, "extending to the Urals." However, at that moment these were just projects for which no special funding was allocated, and Darre's management was absolutely not going to start implementing these undertakings.

It should also not be forgotten that Richard Walter Darre, among other things, headed the Imperial Food Committee, which was in no way subordinate to Heinrich Himmler. But in the bowels of the food committee, since 1937, secret plans began to be developed for "settlement of the territory of Czechoslovakia." Their developer was the committee's chief of staff, Hermann Reischle, who was completely dissatisfied with the fact that no concrete steps were taken to implement "the central requirement of National Socialism, associated with the need to develop

living space." Despite the fact that Reischle was an employee of the SS Main Directorate for Race and Settlements, he did not at all intend to share his developments with the leadership of the guard detachments. Moreover, by the nature of his activity in the SS department, he did everything possible so that the SS would not independently plan peasant settlements.

However, after numerous territorial acquisitions in 1938, the SS began to seriously think about the problem of special peasant settlements. On the territory of Austria and the Sudetenland, which were included in the Third Reich, land was urgently acquired. In July 1939, Himmler even requested from the SD "cases, statistics and cartographic material that would reflect the agricultural and geopolitical situation of the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Romania." In addition, the SD was asked for information about the activity of Catholic missions in these regions. By and large, Himmler began to show an increased interest in the "settlement problem" only in the spring of 1939.

year, when he received an order from Hitler to deal with the resettlement of the German population of South Tyrol (territory of Italy). From that moment on, one could confidently say that Himmler began to develop plans for the "development of living space." These plans were somewhat different from the projects that Darre allowed himself. If Darre was guided by traditional peasant settlements, then Himmler adopted the most aggressive racist slogans. In his ideas, new "settlements" should have been provided to the "military peasantry", which, in the manner of the Cossacks, should have been engaged in agriculture and defending the borders of the Reich. It was hardly possible to convince Darre, and therefore the conflict between him and Himmler was simply inevitable.

As mentioned above, Richard Walter Darre was not just an old friend of Himmler, but also one of the ideologues of the SS. Modern German researchers have found Darré's personal notes, which show that he stopped trusting Himmler around 1937. On April 17, 1937, Darré recorded a meeting with Himmler that he was "very friendly and cordial, which would have been very strange, given my undermined position in the eyes of the public and the Führer." In this case, Darre meant his not very successful speech at the Imperial Congress of Peasants in 1936. It was believed that this speech could damage the prestige of the National Socialists among the peasantry. Darre's speech was pompous, replete with numerous ideological postulates, but it did not cover "the key moments of the National Socialist economic policy." After that, Darré fell into political isolation for a long time. However, from the notes taken in December 1937, it followed that Darré had no doubt that Himmler was prejudiced against him. Two weeks later, Darre in his notes criticizes Himmler's attempts to turn the SS into an order: "The plan of the Reichsführer SS is to turn the SS into a samurai order and merge it with the police. This will not work". Further, Darre began to doubt the need to collect "good blood" exclusively within the SS, as Himmler had planned. From Darre's notes, it followed that he was completely disappointed in Himmler's ideas: "I care about the future of the SS. Should I leave the leadership of the SS General Directorate for Race and Settlement if the SS turns into a capitalist praetorian guard, with a Jesuit command at the head?"

In February 1938, Darre turned to Himmler with a request to leave the post of head of the SS department. The reason for this decisive step was the criticism of the Reichsfuehrer SS against

Joachim Caesar, who at RUSHA served as head of the training department. Himmler reproached him with "excessive intellectuality." Himmler was already resigning the third head of the PyCXA training department. Most likely, he was fundamentally dissatisfied with the way in which "the SS men comprehended the ideas of" blood and soil ". Despite the fact that Darre's proposal was formulated in a mild form and, if desired, a compromise could be found, Himmler decided not to bother himself with diplomatic games and agreed to the resignation of an old friend.

Chapter 20

The outbreak of World War II presented Heinrich Himmler with unheard-of chances. For the first time in many years, he was able to put together an organism, which he himself called the security state corps. Now he could merge the boundlessly overgrown police apparatus, the punitive system, the "SS Order", supplementing all this with military units and formations that, since 1938, began to engage in racial settlement projects. Under the conditions of the war, Himmler was able to once again consolidate his power and significantly expand his political influence. The combat use of rapid reaction units of the SS provided Himmler with the opportunity to fulfill his long-held dream of creating his own army. It was with the outbreak of World War II that an independent military formation arose - parts of the Waffen-SS. Now Himmler could count on the "sacrifice of the SS", who on the battlefield were to strengthen the reputation of the SS as an "elite National Socialist organization." As we remember, even before the start of the war, Himmler insisted that "victims,

brought to the battlefield", will give the security state corps the moral right to punish their compatriots in the rear.

The beginning of the war could be perceived by Himmler as a convenient excuse to intensify terror against opponents of the National Socialist regime. Now he could deal with the "enemies of the state" not only in the Reich itself, but also in the occupied territories. However, the terror had to be complemented by a settler and racial policy, which was planned to be used to create a "peasant ring" around the Reich, and then for a complete racially national reshaping of Europe. With the outbreak of war, Himmler became convinced that he was entrusted with a special "mission" - he believed that he was supposed to become the creator of the Greater German Reich. At a celebration held in Quedlinburg in honor of King Heinrich I, the Fowler, Himmler was again visited by one of the "brilliant ideas", which became almost a byword. In July 1939, he instructed the employees of the SS research society "Heritage of the Ancestors" to find unambiguous parallels between the events of the past and the events of the present. If earlier Himmler simply considered himself a "new incarnation" (reincarnation) of King Henry, whom he considered the founder of the German Empire, now he was eager to bring a "scientific" basis to these ideas.

He wanted his forthcoming activity to have some historical analogue.

"The development of living space" the leadership of the SS in the most aggressive manner began in Western Poland, which was captured in a matter of days after the start of the war. There were not only task forces of the Security Police, but three special task forces of the SS Headquarters for Race and Settlement. If the former immediately set about terror, then the latter were assigned somewhat different tasks. RUSHA groups (so-called Rus-meetings) were small

formations consisting of 8-9 employees of the SS. They began their activities on the territory of Western Poland as soon as the fighting subsided, that is, they followed the Wehrmacht units. Their task was to describe all Polish and Jewish agricultural property. In some cases, the most promising agricultural enterprises were immediately confiscated. To do this, it was only necessary to give instructions to the units of the security police.

From the very first days of the war, SS specialists began to prepare certain territories of Eastern Europe for the beginning of the policy of "Germanization", or, more simply, Germanization. The inventory of agricultural land, inventory and property took place in a terrible hurry. This was explained by the fact that the leadership of the SS intended to fundamentally get ahead of the special commissions that would be sent to the occupied territories by the Ministry of Agriculture, which continued to consider itself as the only authority with the right to engage in "settlement policy." Despite the fact that Richard Walter Darre lost influence in the SS, he was able to pursue his own policy through the peasant and agricultural structures subordinate to him. However, at the beginning of October 1939, Richard Walter Darre was in for a "surprise". It turned out that the SS "intruded into his competence", that is, they began to prepare the creation of SS and peasant settlements on the territory of Western Poland on the basis of the Fuhrer's order. Darre did not hide his disappointment and anger, which he poured out in letters addressed to Himmler and the head of the Imperial Chancellery, Lammers. However, it was no longer possible to change the situation.

On October 7, 1939, Heinrich Himmler celebrated his 39th birthday. He, too, was in for a surprise. A few days

later, Margaretha Himmler would entrust the diary with news of "great joy": "The Fuhrer appointed Heinrich Commissar of Settlements for All Germany. This is a recognition of his success. He works from morning to night." In fact, Himmler's position was called somewhat differently. In October 1939, Hitler signed a decree "On the strengthening of the German people." Based on this document, Heinrich Himmler received a double assignment. On the one hand, he should have officially

to deal with the resettlement of all ethnic Germans who lived outside the Reich, on the other hand, he had to place them in special settlements, which were to arise in strict adherence to the "new racial principles". In addition, Himmler had to protect both the Imperial Germans (Reichsdeutsche) and the Volksdeutsche from "the harmful influence of foreign parts of the population, which could pose a threat both to the Reich and to the German popular community." This gave Himmler the right, without any explanation, to carry out mass deportations in order to "clean up" the territories in order to create "German settlements." In carrying out these tasks, Himmler could count on the support of "all available authorities and institutions." To emphasize the new status of Himmler, he received the post of Imperial Commissioner for the Strengthening of the German Nationality. However, the head of the Imperial Chancellery, Lammers, did not support Himmler's idea to elevate the proposed Imperial Commissariat for the Strengthening of the German Nation to the status of the highest body of state power.

Three days before Hitler gave Himmler a new assignment, Lammers received a concerned letter from Richard Walter Darre. It spoke of "the desire to immediately connect to the implementation of major settlement tasks." At the same time, Darre insisted that his activities should not be limited by any orders and other departments and

institutions. He wrote: "Everyone in Germany knows that the basis for the execution of these buildings by security detachments was laid by my selfless activity as head of the SS Main Directorate for Race and Settlement, which I did for more than seven years. Without this work of mine in the SS, they could not even begin to discuss this problem at all. In addition, Darre severely criticized Himmler's idea regarding the formation of a "fighting peasantry." He stressed that historical examples (the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires) showed that this kind of peasantry could only be used for irregular border guards. Darre believed that units of the Wehrmacht could quite successfully cope with the protection of the borders.

Since Himmler was nevertheless appointed Reichskommissar for the strengthening of the German people, Darre had to admit that he had lost this "competence battle". On October 5, 1939, he sent a letter to the Reichsführer-SS, in which, out of habit, he addressed him as "my dear Heini." Darre reported to Himmler that his removal from the formation of settlements "in the East" "became one of the greatest disappointments of life." In addition, he reproached Himmler for "refusing to report what had been happening for two weeks with the new formation of the German peasantry in the Polish territories." After that, Himmler was obliged to meet with Darre. This happened in the presence of Lammers. The Reichsführer SS promised to give Darre some power in the formation of new "eastern settlements". When it turned out a few weeks later that Himmler had no intention of keeping his promise, Darre wrote to Hermann Göring. In it, he wrote: "On the issue of settlements, the Reichsfuehrer SS squeezed me like a lemon and threw me in the trash, he took advantage of all my knowledge, all my talents, which he used for personal purposes and in

interests of the SS. However, these desperate complaints to Darre could not change anything. Himmler had no intention of allowing Darre to engage in "settlement policy" in the "Eastern Territories", which he considered his exclusive competence.

Himmler, who was at the same time the Reichsfuehrer of the SS, the chief of the German police and the Imperial Commissioner for the Strengthening of the German Nationality, concentrated in his hands all the instruments of power that allowed him to begin the most radical "national transformation" of the occupied territories. However, at first he decided to create a punitive apparatus in these territories, which would be an exact copy of the system formed years earlier in the Third Reich. Himmler appointed Friedrich Wilhelm Krueger as the supreme leader of the SS and police in the East region, who was to become the personal representative of the Reichsführer SS in the General Government (as part of occupied Poland began to be called).

What was new in this organizational scheme was that in the eastern territories the higher SS and police leaders were to be not just "consultants to the heads of the district", but were to subjugate civil power. Formally, Friedrich Wilhelm Krueger was subordinate to Governor-General Frank. However, already in September 1941, Himmler officially allowed Krueger not to carry out Frank's orders regarding police activities. In this case, Himmler himself had to make the decision. In other Polish regions, SS Gruppenfuhrer Wilhelm Kopé (Wartgau), SS Gruppenfuhrer Richard Hildebrandt (West Prussia and Danzig) were appointed the highest leaders of the SS and police. Parts of the territories of Silesia and East Prussia joined the regions of "Breslau" and "Königsberg", where Erich Bach-Zelewski and Wilhelm Radis were the highest leaders of the SS and the police.

From the very beginning, the police apparatus, which was formed in the occupied Polish territories, emerged as an instrument of terror. Punitive actions were supposed even for the smallest offenses. Mass arrests and executions were supposed to fundamentally strangle the Polish resistance. This tactic reached its climax in the spring of 1940, when about 3,500 Polish intellectuals and 3,000 Polish party activists were executed by the security police. In order to facilitate the implementation of terror and punitive actions, in February 1940, Himmler issued a special "Instruction on combating acts of violence in the annexed eastern regions." In this case, the police received the right to immediately carry out the sentences pronounced by police courts against Poles and Jews. In other words, unregulated violence was legalized.

Despite the fact that the draft of this order did not meet with the understanding of Lammers and Göring, it was nevertheless sanctioned by the Reich Ministry of Justice. Himmler, in turn, promised to "restrain" the police courts in sentencing. However, this "restraint" did not last long. Over time, he enlisted the support of Martin Bormann and was able to put pressure on the Ministry of Justice. As a result, in December 1941, he achieved the adoption of a "special criminal law" for Poles and Jews, which was supposed to operate in the "eastern territories". Its execution could also be transferred to the justice authorities, but they preferred to transfer this activity to the police and the SS. The "special criminal law" turned out to be so tough that the execution was provided for even the smallest offenses.

However, one should not assume that no one tried to resist Himmler. In early 1940, the Reichsfuhrer SS was subjected to fierce criticism from the Wehrmacht command.

The dissatisfaction of the military was primarily caused by Himmler's orders, which in one way or another concerned the Wehrmacht. This primarily referred to the massacres carried out by the SS in Poland, as well as to the "order on conception", thanks to which Himmler planned to increase the birth rate in the German lands.

If we talk in more detail about these plots, then in November 1939 and January 1940, the commander of the 2nd Army, Colonel General Blaskowitz, declared protests to the commander-in-chief of the German ground forces Brauchitsch, which concerned the massacres perpetrated by the SS. On this occasion, Brauchitsch spoke twice with Himmler. These conversations took place on January 24 and February 2, 1940. During the second meeting, Himmler very graciously stated that it was a "mistake", but this "mistake" would not change his good attitude towards the Wehrmacht. Brauchitsch, who did not want to be drawn into delicate political affairs, was quite satisfied with such assurances. Moreover, on March 13, 1940, he invited Himmler to Koblenz to make a report to the highest army ranks. Himmler used this occasion to neutralize "rumors" of mass executions. In addition, he hinted that he did not do anything that Hitler did not know about.

Ultimately, the indignation of army officers at the crimes of the Waffen-SS subsided very quickly. However, the order to conceive children, which was signed by Himmler on October 28, 1939, caused much more excitement than the inhuman behavior of the SS. When Himmler gave this order, he proceeded from the following fundamental considerations: "Every war is the loss of the best blood. Some victories won with weapons can

turn into a defeat that will be inflicted on the life force and blood of the people ... Unfortunately, the forced death of the best men

is deplorable, but by no means the most terrible phenomenon. Such are the children unborn from soldiers who died during the war ... A man can die in peace if he knows that his family, everything that he borrowed from his ancestors and what he himself aspired to, will find its continuation in his children. The biggest gift for the widow of a soldier who died at the front is the child she gave birth to from her beloved man. After such a pathetic preamble, Himmler moved on to the essence of his order: "The birth of children by a girl of good blood outside of marriage is not a rash act, but a deep awareness of the moral law of motherhood."

Himmler had already tried to support illegitimate mothers of "good blood" when he created the "Source of Life" ("Lebensborn"), However, in 1936-1937 he did not dare to widely promote illegitimate motherhood. With the outbreak of war, he ordered the SS and police officers to enter into extramarital relationships in order to increase the birth rate. It was a proclamation which, according to Himmler, was to go "beyond bourgeois views and habits." Himmler immediately reminded that the birth of children was "the sacred duty of fathers and mothers." As in many cases, this demand was clearly political in nature. It turned out to be linked to the "settlement policy" planned by the Reichsführer SS. "We must never forget that the victory of arms and the shed blood of soldiers will not make sense if after that there is no victory of fertility and the settlement of new lands."

As if wanting to prove that he himself carried out his orders, Himmler became the father of two illegitimate children, whom Hedwig Potthast bore him. Himmler under no circumstances intended to divorce his wife, at least until Hedwig He gave birth to children for him or in Germany it would not be allowed to have two wives (such a project was being developed

Martin Bormann). It is not excluded that the "order to conceive" was largely dictated by Himmler's personal considerations. He may have sought to give his love relationship some sort of politically sanctioned character. After studying Himmler's personal correspondence, German researchers found that he intended to notify his wife only when his illegitimate children were old enough. On February 15, 1942, Hedwig Potthast gave birth to a boy in the Hohenlichen sanatorium, who was called a rather unusual name - Helge. After that, the Reichsfuehrer SS settled his mistress in the town of Brukenthin, which was located near the estate of Oswald Pohl. It is known that Hedwig Potthast was very friendly with Paul's second wife Eleanor. Hedwig later moved to Berchtesgaden. On June 3, 1944, she gave birth to her second child, a girl named Nanette Dorothea.

Unfortunately, until now, virtually nothing is known about the relationship between Himmler and Hedwig Potthast. The history of their romance is limited to fragmentary information. It can be assumed that Hedwig, who for many years was Himmler's secretary, was privy to many secrets of his official activities, which automatically made her a "bearer of state secrets", and therefore she did not have the right to talk about her personal life, which turned out to be closely linked to professional activity.

Meanwhile, Himmler's wife Margareta, with the outbreak of war, volunteered to take on the social burden. As a well-trained nurse, she accepted a job at a Red Cross medical hospital. However, she often showed her difficult character, entering into numerous conflicts with colleagues. In that

it was more of a nuisance than a benefit.

In the early days of December 1939, the Red Cross assigned her to supervise the military hospitals of the 3rd military district, that is, in Berlin and Brandenburg. However, often Margareta Himmler made trips around the country and even through the occupied territories. During these trips, she made entries in her diary in her characteristic irritated and contemptuous

style. In March 1940, she ended up in Poland. At this time, an entry appears in the diary: "I was in Poznan, Lodz and Warsaw. This is some kind of refuge for Jews and Poles, who in appearance do not at all resemble people. Bringing order here will be a big problem." A few days later, she wrote: "These Poles are not dying of contagious diseases at all. They must be immune. For me, it's incomprehensible." In April 1941, during a visit to Alsace, she made her own "racial" observations: "The population here is very poor. Lots of sloping foreheads."

Around February 1941, Margareta learned the details of her husband's personal life. She felt humiliated, which finally spoiled her already difficult character. When one of her friends divorced her husband because he had a mistress who was expecting a child, Margareta Himmler wrote in her diary: "Everything goes only to men. They are rich and respected. Their old wives have to feed them, help them and tolerate them. What a time!" Heinrich Himmler himself appeared with notorious regularity in Gmünd, where his wife lived with her daughter Gudrun. These visits did not please Margareta at all, but only irritated her. However, Heinrich Himmler came not to his wife, but to his daughter. Gudrun, known to her family as Puppi (Doll), spoke to her father on the phone several times a week. In addition, Himmler

constantly

wrote letters to her. Often he took her with him on trips. For this reason, many photographs have been preserved where Heinrich Himmler is captured with his daughter. After the war, Gudrun refused to recognize her father as a war criminal, preferring to see him as just a "caring

person."

The fundamental political, ethnic, racial and economic reshaping of Europe that Himmler conceived would not have been possible if he had not taken an interest in foreign policy. The previous chapters have already told about international police conferences and the visit of the Reichsführer SS to Fascist Italy. In the autumn of 1940, Himmler again expected a trip abroad. On October 23, 1940, on the Spanish-French border in the city of Endaye, a meeting took place between two dictators: Hitler and Franco. It was assumed that the problems of Spain's accession to the Axis countries would be discussed, but Franco refused to get involved in the Second World War.

Himmler arrived in Spain a few days before negotiations began. He had previously met with Franco. This was a rehearsal for the "big meeting". In addition, Himmler discussed with the Spanish dictator issues related to cooperation between the police of the two countries. The official reports published by the press preferred to focus on the "tourist program" of Himmler's stay in Spain. So, on October 20, 1940, Heinrich Himmler arrived by train in Madrid via San Sebastian. "The access roads to the northern station were packed with crowds of people. Falangists, dressed in uniform, stood in a cordon on both sides of the street, forming a corridor for passage. Flags were flown all over Madrid. The Reichsführer SS was welcomed by the population," the *Völkische Beobachter* newspaper reported some time later, the official press organ of the NSDAP. On the day of his arrival, Himmler immediately met with

Franco. The next day, Himmler headed to Toledo to inspect the Alcazar fortress, which had become a place of pilgrimage for Spanish nationalists. At the beginning of the civil war, the rebellious supporters of General Franco fought here for two months against the superior forces of the Republicans. Himmler then visited the archaeological museum in Madrid, where his attention was drawn to a detailed map of the Great Migration. At the end of the tour, Himmler asked the museum director for copies of some of the exhibits.

In the evening of the same day, Himmler spoke to the local NSDAP group, which consisted mainly of representatives of the German diaspora living in Spain. He decided to share his impressions of the visit: "In northern Spain, even today, traces of German blood that disappeared over the centuries can be seen. However, this sad process was stopped in 1933. After that, Himmler spoke of "settlement politics" and the "German East". This once again shows how important this topic was for him. "In the East we

intend to create new cities and reshape the landscape itself." Note that in Spain there were many desert territories, and therefore Himmler resorted to a certain metaphor: "In the German East, protection from destructive winds should be created through the creation of dense forests. This is the only way to contain the Asian steppe wind."

In later years, Himmler very rarely made official visits abroad. This was due not only to the fact that the number of states that sought to maintain friendly relations with the Third Reich was gradually decreasing. First of all, this happened because Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop began to treat his friend's foreign policy activities with great suspicion.

At every opportunity, Ribbentrop tried to limit Himmler's activities. The reason for this attitude was the events of 1941 that took place in Romania. The fact is that in January 1941, SD agents actively supported the coup attempt in this country. At that time, the "Second Guardsmen" (as the members of the Iron Guard organization, who ended up in its composition after the death of Corneliu Codreanu) were sometimes called, tried to overthrow General Antonescu, who, in fact, was the Romanian dictator. The problem was that Antonescu was a German ally. However, it was German agents who helped putschist leader Horia Sima leave the country, after which they were granted asylum in the Third Reich. This amateurish action led to the fact that Himmler lost the confidence of German diplomats. In addition, the actions of the SD in Romania provoked criticism of Hitler.

Himmler, in turn, by hook or by crook, tried to remove suspicions about the involvement of the Romanian guards in the putsch. As a result, he had to call on his subordinates in writing to cooperate with the Antonescu regime. However, at the same time, Himmler did not deny the fact that a network of his secret agents operated on the territory of Romania. Be that as it may, but from the beginning of 1941, Himmler began to show ostentatious indifference to everything related to domestic Romanian politics. When, in 1944, he personally met with Antonescu, he assured him that he had removed from work "all his people who were involved in the ill-fated legionary coup." However, Antonescu did not believe these words. He made it clear to Himmler that he knew about his clandestine activities in Romania. In response to these "neat" accusations, Himmler no less "naively" said that "he had at his disposal only two or three assistants from the attaché apparatus."

In view of the events in Romania, in April 1941, Ribbentrop terminated the agreement that had been made with Himmler in the very early days of World War II. From that moment on, all diplomats and embassy employees were required to confirm in writing that they were not employees of the SD or the Abwehr. After that, the network of SD agents in the capitals of some European states was automatically liquidated. So, for example, it happened in Bratislava. Ribbentrop's reaction led to the fact that he had to end friendly relations with Himmler, which in turn led to a cooling of relations between the leadership of the SS and the Foreign Office. Now all problems had to be settled only through formal agreements.

In August 1941, Himmler and Ribbentrop nevertheless managed to agree that SS and SD agents located outside the Third Reich would refrain from interfering in foreign affairs. In addition, Ribbentrop received the right to approve all Himmler's foreign trips. At the same time, he could refer to the circular of the head of the imperial office, Lammers, in which the procedure for leaving all prominent figures of the Third Reich abroad was prescribed. When, in October 1942, Himmler wished to fly to Belgrade to inspect the emerging SS division "Prinz Eugen", Ribbentrop ordered that the trip be arranged in the usual official order. However, Himmler left for Belgrade without any permission, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided not to react to this "trick".

Finally, Himmler's plans to create a Greater German Reich took shape only after the Third Reich attacked the USSR. From that moment on, the "war of annihilation" began. Because this topic is too broad to be

could be considered in a book devoted to the biography of one person, it makes sense to designate it with a few strokes.

In late April - early May 1942, the Reichsfuehrer SS took steps to ensure that almost the entire territory of Europe was involved in the program to exterminate the Jews. When the assassination attempt on Heydrich took place, Himmler decided to make this "genocidal project" even more radical. He put the massacres on stream, intending to reach the "final solution of the Jewish question" by the end of the designated year. A significant expansion of the program of massacres led to the fact that the terror apparatus created by Himmler extended its activities to all the occupied territories, and SS employees in many cases began to play the role of "consultants" in the satellite states. In addition, in July 1942, Hitler instructed the Reichsfuehrer SS to lead the "fight against the bandits" in the occupied eastern territories. In carrying out this order, Himmler ordered the extermination of more than 363,000 Jews in the southern regions of the USSR alone. Operations against partisans turned into ethnic terror, which once again indicates how "specifically" Himmler interpreted "the fight against bandits."

In June 1942, Himmler instructed the head of the planning department, Mayer, to significantly expand the plans for "settlement development of living space." Now German settlements were to be created on the territory of Poland, the occupied territories of the USSR, Alsace, Lorraine, Upper Krajina, Lower Styria, as well as on the territory of the protectorates of Bohemia and Moravia. If initially the settlement program was designed for 20 years, then Himmler ordered to reduce the terms of its implementation to 5-10 years. In June

In 1942, Himmler was already informed about the "Germanization" of the protectorates of Bohemia and Moravia, in July 1942 - about the settlement of the environs of Lublin, and in August - about the beginning of the "settlement program" on the territory of Ukraine. At the same time, a "people's political cleansing" of the territory of Alsace and Lorraine was carried out.

It should be noted that by the summer of 1942, Himmler was able to significantly expand the base for the formation of parts of the Waffen-SS. In July 1942, he declared that ethnic Germans living in southeastern Europe were also required to carry out military service, which was "an iron law for the entire nation." After that, the Volksdeutsche began to be actively drafted into the army.

In August 1942, Hitler authorized Himmler to negotiate with all the "German national groups" of Denmark, Norway, Belgium and Holland, which allowed the Reichsfuehrer to strengthen his position by starting the systematic recruitment of "German volunteers" in the Waffen-SS. Attempts to create their own SS divisions were supplemented by the desire to create their own SS complex of enterprises engaged in the production of weapons. In this case, Himmler decided to make the Waffen-SS divisions definitively independent from the Wehrmacht (in a specific situation, from the supply system). However, by September 1942, it became clear that these plans were not destined to come true. Also failed were plans for their own SS construction, in which prisoners of concentration camps were to take part. After that, it was decided that the prisoners would be "hired" by German industrial enterprises. This was the reason to significantly increase the number of prisoners in the camps. Himmler ordered that the number of prisoners be doubled by the second half of the year, which automatically meant a tightening

repression in the Reich itself and increased terror in the occupied territories. In addition, on September 18, 1942, Himmler managed to agree with the Ministry of Justice on the transfer of "asocial elements" from prisons to concentration camps. Taking into account that the camps turned out to be a part of the people whose fault was "racially inferior origin", this practice could be considered as a kind of terror, that is, "destruction by labor." In this case, the extraction of specific profits was associated with the strategy of "racial eradication". In addition, Himmler was able to take over from the Ministry of Justice the right to punish

Russians, Poles, Belarusians and Ukrainians. This became an additional opportunity to fill the concentration camps. Until that moment, there were virtually no grounds for sending the civilian population of the occupied territories brought to the camps for forced labor. Now, the mere suspicion of helping the partisans was enough to send a man to a concentration camp.

Given Himmler's actions, it can be assumed that in 1942 he firmly believed in the inevitable victory of Germany in World War II. He tried to bring her closer by all means available to him. However, for Himmler, "victory for the sake of victory" did not make any sense. The triumph of Germany in World War II was to lead to the creation of a fundamentally new order in which the SS would be given one of the key roles. The Greater German Reich was to be more than just a German empire, which would be largely augmented by occupied and conquered territories. It was supposed to be a qualitatively new, supranational and totalitarian statehood, built on the principles of a racial hierarchy. The German peoples were to take the place of the ruling stratum, which would dominate the entire continent. The place of the rest

European peoples were to be defined according to their "racial qualities". Germany's allies in the world war were to be under the "protection" of the new ruling elite. The Slavs, in most cases, were assigned the role of slaves who did not have the right to their own national existence. The fundamental point in Himmler's plans was that the Great German Reich was not conceivable without the SS.

The SS was to become the basis of a pan-European repressive apparatus that would not only brutally suppress any opposition and eliminate pockets of resistance, but also carry out the mass and systematic destruction of those who were considered a potential enemy of the empire or "racially inferior". The identification of the latter category was to be carried out on the basis of the universal application of racial biological criteria. This policy was to be primarily applied to Jews, East European Gypsies, and significant groups of Slavs. It was about the global system of "preventive defense", the idea of which Himmler expressed back in the mid-30s. However, in the Greater German Reich, the victims of this policy were to be exterminated, not sent to concentration camps. Widespread terror was to become a prerequisite for the "cleansing" of Europe, which in turn was the basis for the future domination of the Germans.

In the Great German Reich, the SS was supposed to become a force that would be actively engaged in the Germanization of Central and Eastern Europe, would control the resettlement of certain ethnic groups. It was the SS that was to be charged with maintaining contacts with the Germanic German ethnic groups living in Southeast Europe, as well as forming a "German core" in Northwest Europe. In turn, this policy

must

was to lead to a constant influx of Volksdeutsche and "German volunteers" into the ranks of the Waffen SS. In this case, the Waffen-SS became a military reflection of the principles of the "new order", in which the value of an individual was determined only by his racial qualities. This selection had to have a downside. The massive use of forced labor was to gradually develop into a program of "destruction by labor" that would be carried out in all concentration camps. This would allow the leadership of the SS not only to derive considerable benefit from free slave labor, but to carry out the destruction of "racially undesirable" and "politically unreliable" elements.

In 1942, Himmler not only specified the plans for the creation of the Greater German Reich, but also significantly corrected the timing of its birth. If at the end of the 30s he said that the Reich could achieve the status of a power that controls the world only for several generations, then in 1942 he reduced this period to several decades. It was in 1942 that Himmler became the owner of virtually unlimited power. He terrified the whole of Europe. He managed to create his own army, which could compete with the Wehrmacht.

However, it was 1942 that became in many ways a turning point in the course of World War II. The Battle of Stalingrad and the landing of the Western Allies in North Africa were the first signs that Himmler's dreams of a Greater German Reich were not destined to come true. The situation on the Eastern Front very quickly put an end to the "colonization" of Soviet territories. In this situation, it may seem very strange, but the more precarious the military and political position of the Third Reich became, the more powerful the Reichsfuehrer SS possessed.

Chapter 21

On May 27, 1942, an assassination attempt was made on Heydrich in Prague. After that, Karl Gebhardt performed several operations, but they were unsuccessful. On June 4, 1942, Heydrich died. After his death, Himmler, on the one hand, lost his closest and most energetic employee, and on the other, freed himself from the influence of the SD chief and competitor that weighed on him. Under these conditions, Himmler decided not to appoint a new head of the SD and the Security Police. On May 28, 1942, Himmler announced to high-ranking SS men that he was taking over the duties of head of the Imperial Security Main Directorate, which at that time included the security police, the SD, the Gestapo and the criminal police. At the same time, Himmler summoned SS Gruppenführer Kaltenbrunner from Vienna, whom he appointed as his permanent deputy in the RSHA. It was not until January 30, 1943 that Kaltenbrunner was officially appointed head of the Security Police and SD. Himmler preferred to retain direct leadership of the Gestapo and the criminal police.

The death of Heydrich, among other things, led to the fact that Himmler had to personally oversee the program to exterminate the Jews. At this time, about 45 thousand Jews were taken from the eastern occupied territories to Theresienstadt, which turned into one large ghetto. However, problems with transportation led Himmler to the idea that the Jews from Western Europe ("for the purpose of productive labor") should have been deported to Auschwitz. By order of the Reichsfuehrer SS, the specialists of the "Jewish abstract" compiled a list. On June 11, 1942, it was ordered to deport 15,000 Jews from Holland, 10,000 from Belgium, and 100,000 from France. Since at least 10% of them were classified as disabled, Himmler allowed "special measures" to be taken against them. In practice this

meant that they were to be destroyed as soon as they arrived at Auschwitz.

However, the "final solution of the Jewish question" was by no means the only problem that worried Himmler in 1942. After units of the Western Allies landed in North Africa in November 1942, the Reichsfuehrer SS needed to take special measures in Southern Europe, which began to be considered a danger zone. The occupation of southern France, which was in a relatively free position, takes place. Himmler sets the task of "clearing" the entire French territory from the "enemies of the Reich." He alludes to the fact that the Vichy regime up to this point carried out not very consistent terror. Naturally, the plans to create a Greater German Reich, which Himmler had hatched some time ago, had to recede into the background. Since the situation on the fronts allowed Himmler to talk about the growing "external threat", he considered it necessary to guarantee security within the Reich, which involved the elimination by all available means of real and imaginary opponents in German-controlled territories. If in Western Europe this resulted in the destruction of centers of anti-fascist resistance and a new round of the program for the "final solution of the Jewish question", then in Eastern Europe the emphasis was placed on the "fight against bandits".

By the beginning of 1943, Himmler managed to concentrate in his hands all kinds of means that allowed him not only to maintain, but also to strengthen personal power. Among other things, he decided to increase the number of Waffen-SS units by attracting "foreign volunteers." Having been appointed to the post of Reich Minister of the Interior, Himmler becomes responsible for the entire internal

politics. Also, OH was involved in the implementation of the weapons program, overseeing the project to create jet missiles. The expansion of the spheres of activity to which Himmler was involved invariably led to the fact that he was no longer perceived solely as the head of a ruthless terrorist apparatus. However, this by no means meant that terror itself inside Germany and in the occupied territories was on the decline. So, for example, when German troops occupied southern France, Himmler summoned the commander of the security police in the French territories, SS Standartenführer Helmut Knochen. The Reichsfuehrer SS demanded "daily reports on how many arrests of politically dangerous elements."

As always, when Himmler planned to expand his powers, he turned to Hitler. On December 10, 1942, he reported to the Fuhrer that the most radical policy had to be pursued in France. Himmler substantiated his claim with the following information. "At present, there are at least one and a half million mortal enemies of the Reich and the Axis countries on the territory of previously free France." Of these: 600-700 thousand Jews, 500-600 thousand Italian anti-fascists, 300-400 thousand "Red Spaniards", about 20 thousand Anglo-Saxons, 80 thousand Poles, a certain number of Greeks. All of them can move freely, which means they pose a significant threat to the supply of German-Italian troops located near the Mediterranean Sea. To this number must be added the multitude of hostile Frenchmen, who primarily consist of communists, Gaullists and clerics." The presented picture made a strong impression on Hitler. After that, he instructed the Reichsführer SS to "abolish" 600-700 thousand French and North African Jews. Everyone else should have been arrested and

sent either to forced labor or to concentration camps.

On August 20, 1943, Himmler was awaiting a new appointment. He became the Imperial Minister of the Interior. Goebbels noted in his diary that by this time the Reichsfuehrer SS had become "the paramount personality of our regime." The former Minister, Wilhelm Frick, who had been in office since 1933 and had at one time been Himmler's rival, had to be content with the representative post of Imperial Protector of Bohemia and Moravia. Hitler, who appointed Himmler Minister of the Interior, did not at all expect that he would undertake a reform of the state apparatus or would be engaged in streamlining relations between party and state bodies. Himmler just had to "more effectively ensure the internal security of the Reich", for which he needed a new position. In those days, Goebbels, not without inner envy, wrote in his diary: "There is no doubt that Himmler is simply destined to direct German domestic policy. In any case, under any circumstances, he can guarantee the internal security of the Reich."

Nevertheless, Himmler immediately after 26 August made several changes in the work of the Ministry of the Interior. He divided all functional duties into two large groups. One of them received the code name "Internal Administration" and was subordinate to the Secretary of State Stuckart. The second group was called "Health". It was headed by Secretary of State Leonardo Conti. In addition, Himmler transferred the tasks of the 4th department of the ministry, which oversaw the activities of the institutes involved in folk and land research, to the SS Main Directorate for Race and Settlements. At the same time, this sector

PyCXA was supervised by SD specialists who worked abroad. The Reichsfuehrer SS took not only a step that made it possible to use the scientific and intellectual potential of these institutions for espionage purposes, but also contributed to the formation of a whole trend in National Socialist science. Thanks to this initiative, such research structures as the Research Society for the Study of Volksdeutsche Problems, the German Foreign Institute, the Wannsee Institute, etc., were brought together. The abilities of scientists who worked in these structures turned out to be focused on a long-term program " development of living space."

After his appointment as minister, Himmler appeared in the building of the Ministry of the Interior only three or four times. He preferred to give instructions from his headquarters, where Himmler's assistant Rudolf Brandt was responsible for the activities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. By and large, the Ministry of the Interior, which had long lost control over the punitive apparatus, lived its own independent life, directly obeying the orders of Secretary of State Stuckart. Himmler did not visit the ministry, not only because he was busy with many other tasks, but in large part because he had a distrust of the state bureaucracy. He never hid his contemptuous attitude towards lawyers and officials. After becoming a minister, Himmler even made several attempts to overcome the traditional bureaucratic formalism and sketchiness of actions. To get rid of the facelessness of administrative orders, the Reichsfuehrer SS ordered officials to sign the prepared papers and documents with their own hands. Himmler also expressed the idea that the Landrats should not have been kept in the same composition for more than ten years. In addition, Himmler, trying to fight corruption in government, signed a decree

according to which close relatives could not work in the same government. However, in small towns it was hardly possible to fulfill this requirement.

In general, Himmler once again tried to consolidate his reputation as a "caring" boss. For example, he urged his employees in the ministry to "worthily" (perhaps the most popular word in Himmler's lexicon) treated citizens. The new minister angrily advised the chief burgomasters: "Treat these gentlemen like officials like a pig, that is, exactly as they treat the common people." Himmler gave the task of "re-educating the bureaucracy": "We will re-educate them. The one who does not succumb to education will immediately fly out of his chair.

Himmler tried to stake on "strengthening self-government", although by "self-government" he understood something of his own. In any case, he planned to carry out a redistribution of duties between burgomasters and landrats. This initiative had a backstory. The first attempts to reorganize the control system were made in early 1943. This need was caused by the war, and therefore the bureaucratic structure as a whole had to be simplified. Most of the administrative tasks had to be transferred to the lower level. The party office of the NSDAP had a slightly different opinion. They implied that it was necessary to strengthen the middle-level instances, which supposedly would strengthen the authority of the party. In practice, it should have looked like this: the Gauleiters became independent from the ministerial bureaucracy, and the Oberburgomasters from the Landrats. If Frick tried to oppose this initiative of Martin Bormann, then Himmler openly supported it. When he spoke of "strengthening self-government", he meant, first of all, the weakening of the state

bureaucracy. In this respect, Himmler could count on Bormann's support. Not coincidentally, a few days before Himmler's appointment as minister, they both discussed the future policy of the Ministry of the Interior. However, this union was short-lived.

It should be noted that, after Himmler became Minister of the Interior, he automatically fell into Hitler's "inner circle", which included: Goebbels, Bormann and Speer. Himmler immediately supported Goebbels' course of "total war", which was supposed to lead to a radical change in the entire German society. Goebbels, in response, gave some flattering comments about Himmler. However, the Minister of Propaganda was frightened by the growing influence of the head of the SS. Goebbels confided these fears to his diary: "One way or another, there was too much in the hands of Himmler. He can't handle many things on his own." Goebbels, always sensitive to the moods and shades of the "struggle of competencies", immediately noticed when the alliance between Bormann and Himmler cracked. "Bormann became more skeptical of Himmler, as he appropriated too many things for himself. It will hardly be good if he becomes the only influential figure among the National Socialist leaders. Among people close to Hitler, in general, there were never permanent alliances. "The struggle of competencies", which in every possible way

supported by Hitler, wishing to act as an arbiter and impartial arbitrator, assumed a balance between rivalry and common interests.

When the unsuccessful assassination attempt on Hitler took place on July 20, 1944, Heinrich Himmler found himself in a difficult situation. On the one hand, he received additional powers that allowed him to punish the conspirators, on the other hand, he should have explained how the Gestapo "missed" the conspiracy of army officers. It cannot be said that Gestapo agents are completely

knew nothing about secret meetings of conservative officers. In this environment, even several arrests were made. However, no one among the leadership of the SS could even imagine that a real conspiracy was being prepared, which involved the physical elimination of Hitler and the seizure of power in the country. In addition, it was difficult for Himmler to explain how the SS leadership could admit that Hitler did not die during the assassination attempt only due to pure chance. To avoid all these "uncomfortable" questions, Himmler had to urgently develop a vigorous activity, which he, in fact, did. Already on July 21, 1944, a special commission was created under the 4th Directorate of the RSHA, consisting of eleven operational groups, in which there were a total of about 400 people. This commission, literally in a matter of days, managed to carry out about 700 arrests and find out all the details of the conspirators' plan. However, even in this case, the Gestapo did not know how global the anti-Hitler conspiracy was.

On July 30, 1944, Himmler met with Hitler once again. At this meeting, the alleged actions against the "criminals" were to be discussed. On that day, Himmler wrote in his notebook: "1) the trial; 2) the Stauffenberg family; 3) Seydlitz's relatives." These records meant that it was supposed to begin the persecution not only of the conspirators themselves, but also of their families. In the case of General Walter von Seydlitz, the situation was somewhat different. He physically could not take part in the conspiracy, as he was in Soviet captivity. His fault was that he agreed to head the "Union of German Officers", which was actively used in the USSR for military propaganda. In total, 140 people were arrested in July and August, who were relatives of the army conspirators. On October 25, 1944, Kaltenbrunner informed Martin Bormann that Himmler

refused to introduce "special principles of family responsibility" into general practice. He assumed that each case had to be analyzed separately. One way or another, but until the spring of 1945, about 200 people stayed in the Dachau concentration camp, who fell under the influence of "selective family responsibility." In addition, Himmler used the conspiracy against Hitler as a pretext for another wave of terror, which was to be directed against the communists and social democrats. On August 14, 1944, Himmler wrote in his official calendar: "It's time to perform Thälmann." Four days later, the former chairman of the German Communist Party, Ernst Thälmann, was executed.

In fact, the wave of terror and revenge on the relatives of the army conspirators were by no means the only consequences of the events of July 20, 1944, which were directly related to Heinrich Himmler. The fact is that on the day of the assassination attempt, Hitler appointed the Reichsführer SS as commander of the reserve army. In this post, Himmler replaced Colonel General Friedrich Fromm, Stauffenberg's immediate superior. Fromm knew about the impending conspiracy, although he did not take an active part in it. Becoming commander of the reserve army, Himmler received one of the most influential army positions. Now he could deal with the problems of arming the army, criminal prosecution of army employees, was responsible for prisoner of war camps, and was in charge of recruiting and military training. In addition, Himmler could henceforth supervise the activities of all army schools. Also, one should not forget that in the summer of 1944 the reserve army counted 2 million people. It is generally accepted that the appointment of Himmler as commander of the reserve army was a reaction to a military conspiracy. Allegedly, this decision was supposed to humiliate the regular military, become a kind of punishment. In fact, for someone who followed the personnel changes in

Third Reich, Hitler's decision would not come as a surprise. As early as July 15, that is, five days before the assassination attempt on Hitler, the Reichsführer SS began to get acquainted in detail in the affairs of General Colonel Fromm. It is possible that this circumstance prompted Fromm to take the side of the conspirators. The general did not want the reserve army to be turned into an SS operational group sooner or later.

So what happened on July 15, 1944? On this day, Hitler authorized Himmler to take over fifteen divisions, the formation of which was planned for the near future. This was a serious intervention of the Reichsführer SS in the military sphere and suggested that in the future all formations formed would be transferred to the Waffen-SS. These powers were of strategic importance to Himmler. The disposal of new divisions would make it possible to replenish the strength of the ranks of the Waffen-SS, which by the summer of 1944 had suffered serious losses. The replenishment that the Wehrmacht command sent was clearly insufficient. Among other tasks that Hitler entrusted to Himmler was also "National Socialist education". If we take into account that in May and June 1944, in his speeches to the German generals, Himmler openly confessed to the murders of Jews, it becomes clear that the Wehrmacht command was hinted that the army became only a tool to achieve political and ideological goals. And this meant that the army officials were also responsible for the criminal acts of the National Socialist regime.

On July 15, 1944, in the afternoon, Himmler was to meet with General Fromm at the Führer's headquarters to inform him of his new powers.

During the meeting, the SS Reichsführer told the general that he had to prepare the divisions being formed (soon they would receive the sonorous name "people's grenadiers") so that they were subordinate to the headquarters of the 3rd SS corps. When Himmler got real power over the reserve army, the boundaries between the formations of the Wehrmacht and the Waffen-SS were virtually erased. A year earlier, having become Minister of the Interior, he was going to extend his power over the entire Reich and give a new sound to the old idea of the "protective state corps". Now, having control over the army, the "guard corps" has turned into something incredibly titanic.

If we consider the unsuccessful assassination attempt on Hitler from the point of view of changing domestic politics, then it can be interpreted as an excuse used by certain National Socialist politicians to finally convince Hitler of the need to start a "total war". In addition to Goebbels, Bormann and Speer, Heinrich Himmler can be attributed to their number. It was this four at the end of the war that concentrated in their hands all the levers of governing the state and the party. And now the attention of this group was turned not to enlist the support of Hitler, but in order to undermine the position of the once second person in the Third Reich - Hermann Goering. However, the "Group of Four" preferred to act exclusively as Hitler's entourage and in no way went beyond this status. None of the four made even a conditional attempt to convince everyone else that the end of the war was possible only without the Führer. The habit of enlisting Hitler's support, developed over the years of the "competence struggle", turned out to be so strong that the inherently powerful four preferred to limply sail towards inevitable military defeat.

Himmler, as commander of the reserve army, gave the first instructions already on the night of July 20-21, 1944. He began to replace the army officers who were somehow connected with General Fromm with SS officers personally devoted to him. So, for example, Himmler appointed the head of the SS Main Operations Directorate, Obergruppenführer Hans Uetner, as his deputy and chief of staff. He immediately understood what the Reichsführer SS wanted from him. At the end of July 1944, in his letter to Fegelein, who represented the interests of the SS at Hitler's headquarters, Uetner wrote: "It is necessary to assemble a team of the most cruel commanders who will shoot anyone who dares to open his mouth." Himmler himself, in his appeal to staff officers, preferred to choose more restrained words. He spoke of the "deep sorrow that seized us, the soldiers who learned about the assassination." However, Himmler was no longer sure that the army officers present were really mourning the fact that

the attempt was unsuccessful. But the less the Reichsfuehrer SS called for a return to the "true soldier's virtues", which were the best means in the fight against the spirit of rebellious defiance. In the list of these "virtues" he included the qualities that he had been trying to instill in SS employees for more than a year: loyalty, obedience, diligence, faith. He told staff officers: "Your upbringing and your training were in vain if they were not based on an unshakable faith in German law and German victory. I base this belief on the value of the Germanic religion and the Germanic race. I am convinced that we are worth a lot more than everyone else."

In the last days of July 1944, Himmler had to speak more than once. He wanted to address the officers of each of the divisions of the reserve army. It should have been obvious to a careful observer that Himmler used the word "faith" so often that it began to look like a kind of spell. By

by and large, the Third Reich was in a hopeless situation, and therefore Himmler had no choice but to rely on irrational "faith."

The Reichsfuehrer SS allowed himself a slightly different tone of speech on August 3, 1944, when he met with the Reichsleiters and Gauleiters of the NSDAP. He never once mentioned "deep sorrow." Instead, he lashed out with angry accusations at the "officer cabal." He proclaimed all failures, defeats, crises "the work of the reactionary and incompetent officers of the General Staff." Moreover, he stated that "these officers during the years 1941-1943 permeated the army from top to bottom with defeatist moods." Such distrust was reflected in the measures that Himmler began to carry out as commander of the reserve army. In the early days of August 1944, he received permission from Hitler to simplify the organizational structure of the army, the Waffen-SS, the police and the Organization Todt. Himmler wanted to put Oswald Pohl's reserve army on the solution of economic and economic issues. When he cautiously noticed that General Heinz Ziegler was already engaged in this activity, Himmler sharply straightened the Obergruppenfuehrer: "I am not at all interested in what Mr. Ziegler is doing and whether he even exists in this world." After that, Himmler forbade Pohl to transfer even the most insignificant information to the Wehrmacht command.

It is impossible not to mention another aspect of Himmler's appointment as commander of the reserve army. As he became responsible for all POW camps, the Reichsfuehrer-SS was faced with a problem that he could not solve. It was about attracting Soviet prisoners of war to the auxiliary units of the Wehrmacht. The Reichsfuehrer SS has always opposed this. In his infamous 1943 speech

year, which OH said in Poznan, Himmler called General Vlasov nothing more than a "Russian pig." However, in July 1944, he agreed to the mediation of the editor of the Black Corps magazine, SS Standartenfuehrer Guenter D'Aleken. The meeting between Vlasov and Himmler took place on September 16, 1944. From the very beginning, Vlasov raised the issue of the propaganda brochure "Underhuman" ("Untermensch"), Himmler avoided direct discussion of racial theory, but after the meeting he ordered to stop any propaganda directed against "subhumans" (the brochure was banned for use even earlier). The result of the meeting between the Reichsfuehrer SS and Vlasov was an agreement to create a "Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia".

On November 14, 1944, the founding congress of the "Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia" was held in Prague, proclaiming the unification of all anti-Soviet forces located in Germany, including emigrant organizations, national committees and eastern formations. The goal of the "Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia" was proclaimed "the struggle for a new free Russia against the Bolsheviks and exploiters." However, all these attempts could no longer change the military situation of Germany.

In the early days of September 1944, Heinrich Himmler gave the order to prevent the retreat of German units along the Western Front by all means. In his speech to the commanders of the military districts and the heads of the schools, the Reichsführer, not without inner pride, declared that over the past week he had traveled the entire front zone and endangered areas: "I traveled along the Western Front from Trier to Mulhausen, Colmar and Metz." In addition, the new commander-in-chief

reserve army said that "where it was needed", OH stopped and talked with "thousands of soldiers". To the officers, he recommended "hard to suppress any negative rear phenomena." The fact that in his military career in 1918 Himmler remained a rear officer did not bother him at all. In Hitler's eyes, too, Himmler appeared not as a talented military leader, but as a fanatical activist who could be suitable for certain military tasks. Most likely, it was for this reason that in September 1944 the Führer instructed the SS chief to take up the formation of the Volkssturm.

The idea of a paramilitary militia that could be used to carry out temporary tasks of a military nature haunted Heinrich Himmler for several years. As early as January 1942, he created the landwacht ("land guard"), which developed into two independent organizations in a year: the landwacht itself and the stadtwacht ("city guard"). Control over them belonged simultaneously to both Himmler and Bormann, who entered into a special agreement between themselves. Members of the SA, SS employees, members of the NSDAP and party activists who, for various reasons, were not drafted into the ranks of the Wehrmacht, were preferred to take to the landwacht. Landwacht and Stadtwacht were usually used to carry out guard duty during the transportation of foreign citizens driven to forced labor or when searching for prisoners of war who had escaped from the camp.

However, by the summer of 1944, the situation on the fronts began to change radically. Under these conditions, the leadership of the National Socialist Party began to think that if the Red Army and parts of the Allies were still able to break into German territory, then something like a Landsturm had to be opposed to them. These plans are constantly changing. In the middle

September 1944, Heinrich Himmler, Martin Bormann and Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, representing the Wehrmacht high command, agreed to create a Volkswehr ("people's militia"). However, the name was soon changed again. On September 26, 1944, Hitler signed the Decree "On the Creation of the German Volkssturm". The word "Volkssturm" was more sonorous, more militant, which was considered more appropriate for a crisis situation. Hitler's decree stated that all able-bodied men between the ages of 16 and 60 were to be enlisted in the Volkssturm. Gauleiters were appointed responsible for the formation of the Volkssturm units. Himmler, as the commander of the reserve army, was obliged to begin training the Volkssturm units, supply them with weapons and uniforms. Also, Himmler, after receiving appropriate instructions from Hitler, was obliged to ensure the "combat use" of Volkssturm units.

During a meeting with the commanders of military districts and heads of military schools, which took place on September 21, 1944, Himmler announced the impending creation of the Volkssturm. However, the official announcement of this information took place actually a month later - on September 18, 1944 in Königsberg. Himmler chose a very symbolic day for his speech, which was broadcast to the entire Reich by radio. The Reichsführer SS recalled that October 18 marked 131 years since the "Battle of the Nations", which took place near the walls of Leipzig. It was an almost perfect occasion to link the Landsturm of 1813 and the Volkssturm of 1944. Himmler intended to say that the Volkssturm was to do the same thing that the German Landsturm did during the wars of liberation. The head of the SS called for courage to be drawn from the glorious German history - at one time, the people's militia managed to contribute their own

contribution to the

victory over Napoleon, despite the seemingly hopeless military situation. The Reichsführer SS, who gravitated towards historical analogies, proclaimed that a similar role was now assigned to

Volkssturm: "Our enemies will have to understand that every kilometer they pass through our land will be flooded with streams of their blood. Every city block, every village, every house, every copse will be protected by young men and old men, and, if necessary, by women and girls. On November 12, 1944, in all the Gaus, in a solemn atmosphere, as far as it was generally possible under those conditions, parts of the Volkssturm were sworn in.

Having no real opportunity to deal with the affairs of the Volkssturm, Himmler put SS Obergruppenführer Gottlob Berger at the head of it, who was to form his own headquarters. Energetic Berger very quickly went beyond the duties assigned to him, which were limited only to the formation of parts of the Volkssturm. As a result, Bormann began to make claims to Himmler. Himmler urged Berger "not to exceed the bar," but in the end neither the Reichsführer SS nor his subordinate felt it necessary to listen to Bormann, who clearly could not control the situation.

If we talk about the specific activities of Berger, then it should be noted that on October 16 he compiled a training program for the Volkssturm units, which, along with the study of various types of weapons, provided for "worldview activation." Purely theoretically, 6 million people were a considerable force. Nevertheless, the military training of these "soldiers of the last hour" was more than disgusting. The "service" in the Volkssturm was reduced to the fact that in the evenings and on weekends, old people and children dressed in civilian clothes mastered shooting skills. In most cases, from the uniform they have

there was only a Volkssturm bandage. This was the only sign by which it could be determined that the Volkssturmists were in the ranks of the regular army. If they were captured with weapons in their hands and in civilian clothes, they could be shot as saboteurs. The bandage gave a vague hope that the Volkssturmists would be considered prisoners of war, and therefore they would be subject to the norms of international law.

Despite the insignificant military training and age of the Volkssturmists, some of the National Socialist leadership believed that these shortcomings could be compensated for by the tactics of the so-called "Kleinkrieg". It was planned that the advantage of children and the elderly would be a good knowledge of the area, which they could skillfully use for combat sorties. It is for this reason that Gottlob Berger recommended the adventure books of Karl May as a "teaching aid". In practice, the Volkssturm did not so much take part in the battles as they were involved in the construction of fortifications and digging trenches. The first experience of using Volkssturm units in real battles was so terrible that in February 1945, Hitler signed a decree that ordered the use of Volkssturmists exclusively to ensure order in the rear.

However, when Germany became sorely lacking in troops (especially on the Eastern Front), the Volkssturmists were thrown into the heat of battle without hesitation. If you do not pay attention to the fact that the real combat value of the Volkssturm units was extremely small, its creation was of great political importance. Himmler and Bormann wanted to gain control of all men capable of holding weapons. Since parts of the Volkssturm were under the jurisdiction of the SS and police courts, this became an additional

mobilization action. The main reason for the creation of the Volkssturm could be not so much the desire to provide an armed rebuff to the advancing units of the Red Army or the Western allies, but to nip in the bud the possible urge to revolt. Himmler once again cared about the "internal security of the Reich." The fear that the population would get out of control was an echo of the events of 1918, and then the slogan of the "treacherous stab in the back" circulated among the nationalist milieu.

In his radio address of October 18, 1944, Himmler spoke not only about the creation of the Volkssturm. He hinted at the forthcoming emergence of another organization: "If the enemy captures our areas, then a wave of German resistance will break out in them. Like

werewolves, death-despising volunteers will constantly harm the enemy, destroying his communications and supply system.

One of the main problems of the emergence of the National Socialist partisan movement was that the creation of detachments was entrusted to the SS, and to those departments that were in no way connected with the Waffen-SS. Moreover, the "werewolves" turned out to be independent not only from the SD, but even from the RSHA (Reich Security Main Directorate). This state of affairs immediately became the cause of some tension that arose between the Nazi partisans and the SS intelligence officers. Not surprisingly, Ernst Kaltenbrunner and Walter Schellenberg did their best to neutralize this idea. SS structures that performed purely police functions received control over the Werwolf. The fact that Himmler began to form the "Werwolf" in the heart of Germany under the control of his own police, once again indicated the purpose of the "werewolves" as an instrument of acts of terror and intimidation.

On September 19, 1944, Himmler instructed the SS Obergruppenführer Hans Prutzmann to lead the formation of the Werewolf detachments, who was endowed with special powers. This SS officer was a classic representative of the "new aristocracy". He was distinguished by a sharp mind and a broad outlook. But these qualities faded against the background of his exorbitant vanity and insufficient attention to the affairs entrusted to him. In the first stages of the creation of the partisan movement, he rather flippantly boasted that "his organization" would radically change the military situation in Germany. This fact alone indicated that he had little idea of what he would have to face. Prutzmann's experience in occupied Ukraine, as well as his intimate knowledge of East Prussia, where he came from, predetermined Himmler's decision. After the Germans were expelled from the territory of the USSR, and Prutzmann himself remained out of work, the Reichsfuehrer decided to entrust him with the creation of the Werwolf. At the same time, while maintaining his police post in Koenigsberg, he was released from any other assignments and tasks. The construction of the partisan movement from the SS began with the creation of the so-called Prutzmann Bureau, which was located on the outskirts of Berlin.

Another feature of the emerging partisan movement was that it was assigned the functions of simple sabotage groups that were supposed to operate in the border regions of Germany. Any hint that the regular military units could not defend the borders of the Reich could be regarded by the National Socialist leadership as "defeatist sentiments". As a result, the sphere of activity of groups of "werewolves" from the SS was limited to some border areas that could "accidentally" occupy enemy units that had a significant numerical superiority. Such an ideological attitude had nothing to do with the real picture of hostilities. As a result, the ideology

allowed the SS leadership to prepare for 1945, when Soviet and allied troops entered German territory.

The partisan units, conceived by the top of the SS, were supposed to operate within the framework of narrow tasks that fully corresponded to the concept of Clausewitz - waging a rail war, systematic sabotage, and breaking communication lines. The National Socialist leaders naively hoped that such measures would make it possible to delay the offensive of the Red Army and allied troops. The "werewolves" were also supposed to engage in political and economic sabotage, kill anti-fascist activists, distribute propaganda materials, collect information about the movement of enemy troops, call on the local population to passively resist the invaders (although in the last days of the war, the "werewolves" were less and less connected with local residents). An article published in the Völkische Beobachter newspaper compared the actions of the "werewolves" to "wolf packs", groups of German submarines that hunted Allied convoys. As evidenced by captured documents that fell into the hands of the Red Army, at the end of the war, the National Socialist leadership somewhat revised its attitude towards the partisan movement. Now "werewolves" were seen as the core of a future broad movement

resistance, which was to be joined not only by local residents, but also by military personnel from the defeated and surrounded parts of the Wehrmacht.

The training courses for "werewolves" (no matter how paradoxical it may sound) were based on the translation of the Soviet "Guide for the Partisan", written at the beginning of the war. In Germany, this book was published under the title "Advice to the Werewolf". During this brief briefing, the future "werewolves"

studied methods of sabotage, Morse code, methods of wireless transmission of information, assassination technologies. To these specific "disciplines" were added enhanced training, increased endurance. The women recruited into the Werewolf received special training to act as scouts. They were recommended to get jobs in the occupation authorities as secretaries or service personnel. Each future "werewolf" was deprived of all personal documents. His personality was virtually erased. This was to prevent their identification by Allied counterintelligence in case of failure. This step also had a psychological side - a person, as it were, lost his personality, and becoming part of a secret organization, he lived only in the name of fulfilling his goal. Actually, recruits became "werewolves" after they signed a paper that looked more like an oath. In it, a recruit asked to be accepted into the Werewolf. He agreed that any of his offenses were punishable by death. As such, there could be an attempt to desert, and surrender to the enemy, etc. An interesting fact is that the second party to sign the papers was the Reichsfuehrer SS Heinrich Himmler. That is, the "werewolves" did not swear allegiance to the Hitler, but directly to the organization, giving a "vow" to the national resistance.

Countless difficulties in recruiting and training "werewolves" were caused by the lack of a stable bureaucratic basis in the "Werewolf". By the end of the war, it became obvious that this organization could not operate effectively without having a certain patronage of some military or paramilitary organization. Only in this case, "Werewolf" could get the necessary resources, for which in the last years of the war in Germany there was a fierce bureaucratic war. Himmler, who was very successful in hardware battles, immediately

drew attention to this circumstance. In November 1944, the Reichsfuehrer SS held a meeting with the leadership of the RSHA, during which he proposed to transfer the Werewolf under the control of Skorzeny. According to Himmler, this would have kept the SS in control of the Werewolves. Prützmann, who was present at the time, could only rely on fate. Skorzeny politely declined his boss's offer, citing the fact that he already had enough work to do. In fact, "saboteur number 1" refused due to the fact that he did not consider the "Werewolf" an effective tool. In practice, the "werewolves" were actively involved in activities to intimidate the population and kill politically objectionable figures. In October 1944, Himmler signed a decree in which any officials who found themselves in the occupied territory were forbidden, under pain of death, to cooperate with the enemy. Although this decree ordered German officials to fulfill their duties, in particular, to help the German population. This decree was followed by an order to destroy all traitors who "decided to cooperate with the enemy."

However, terror, intimidation and population control did not long remain topics that worried Himmler. When, by the autumn of 1944, the troops of the Western Allies liberated almost the entire territory of France from the Germans, the western borders of the Reich were under attack. At this time, Himmler received a new task. In November 1944 he was appointed commander of the Upper Rhine Army Group. His task was to quickly create a semblance of a defensive line from hastily assembled units of the reserve army, Volkssturm units, border guard and police units. In the first week of January 1945, formations of the Upper Rhine Army Group provided tactical support to Army Group G, which was to make a diversionary offensive during Operation North Wind. The purpose of this operation was

withdrawal of German troops after the failure of the Ardennes offensive. In general, the formations of the Upper Rhine Army Group launched three offensives, but in none of them were they able to succeed. In fact, there were no records left in the combat logs that would allow us to evaluate or even characterize the activities of Heinrich Himmler as a commander.

At the end of 1944, Heinrich Himmler's headquarters were located in his special train, which stood at the Triberg train station in the Black Forest. The main advantage of this mobile office was that in the event of bombing, it could take refuge in the safety of railway tunnels. On January 21, 1945, Himmler took his train to Schneidemühl, where he was to begin a new assignment. This time, Hitler appointed the head of the SS as commander of Army Group Vistula. In those days, Goebbels wrote in his diary that this decision was dictated by a number of circumstances. "Combined-arms formations, which rolled back under the blows of the Soviets, were prone to decay. Here a strong hand was required to turn them into combat units again.

If you believe the diaries of Goebbels, then at that time "the Fuhrer was exceptionally pleased with Himmler's activities," and therefore the choice fell on him. ("He's perfect for the job.") Realizing how much Himmler's influence had grown, Goebbels suggested that he be made commander-in-chief. However, Hitler was not ready to share power "until Himmler was fit to carry out large operational tasks." It can be assumed that the appointment to the post of commander of the Wisla armies was a kind of exam.

Detailed information about Himmler's activities in this capacity has been preserved. First of all, historians have to thank Colonel Eismann for this, who was an officer in the general staff of the Vistula Army Group. The first time Hans-Georg Eismann met Himmler was in January 1945 in Schneidemühl, where the train of the Reichsführer SS arrived. Eismann recalled: "Himmler met me in the elegantly decorated saloon of the carriage. He listened to my report, after which he went to the table that stood in the middle of the room. On it was the on-duty map of the supreme command. He briefly asked about my past service, after which he actively began to study the position of the positions. At that time, the task of Army Group Vistula was to close the gap in the front line that had arisen between the positions of Army Group Center and Army Group North. Along the entire width of this gap, which was 120 kilometers, it was necessary to create a defensive line that ran along the line of Middle Silesia - Lower Vistula. However, as Eismann noted in his memoirs, the width of the front began to increase and soon reached 450 kilometers. At this time, Himmler could not give any clear instructions. Eismann noted that he gave out only general phrases: "With the help of Army Group Vistula, I will stop and defeat the Russians. I will push them back." As Eismann noted: "One could not help but feel that the blind man was talking about the shades of colors."

When, during the operational meeting, Eismann asked what forces and by what time could be made available to the command, Himmler began to make one of his long speeches. He denounced the officers of the general staff, who were "trained only in school wisdom, but were deprived of the talent for improvisation." Again and again, Himmler spoke of defeatism among the military. He saw the only way out in "energetic activity." After that, the Reichsfuehrer SS

I had to explain what Eismann meant by no means. Eismann himself had never seen Himmler before, and therefore left a description of him. "He looks like a man of average height. The upper part of the body is somewhat elongated. Wheel legs. The figure is more round than slender.

He wears a plain gray uniform. From the front, the head resembles a sharp triangle. The weak, almost sloping chin is very striking. Very lively, but in most cases slightly narrowed eyes. Together with the cheekbones, they give an Asian impression. Narrow but not rigid mouth line. There is nothing demonic in the face, nothing cruel, nothing

majestic. The usual face of the average man in the street. His hands stand out a little. There is nothing noble about them. Somewhat clumsy, large palms with long fingers that end in broad tips. If he offered his hand for a handshake, then it might seem that it was a woman's hand.

Eismann found that Himmler's headquarters was not suitable for commanding Army Group Vistula, since it basically lacked equipment and communications. Indeed, only one telephone line was connected to the special train of the Reichsführer SS. The new commander could not even contact the neighboring army groups. In addition, according to the military, Himmler was not able to assess the operational situation. "He looked at the map as if spellbound and saw a huge hole in the front line that he had to plug. He very often used the words "offensive", "attack on the flanks" He could only proclaim a course for the offensive. Back in July 1944, the Reichsführer SS spoke about the principles that he would adhere to in his military activities. He told army officers: "The time for well-thought-out operations has passed. In the east, the enemy is already at our borders.

The only thing left to do here is to attack and stop him." Gradually, Himmler decided to concentrate his efforts on the defense of three "fortresses" (this is how the Third Reich preferred to call fortified cities that did not have the right to surrender):

Thorn, Poznań and Schneidemühl. On January 30, 1945, he set as an example the commandant of the "fortress" Schneidemühl, who was proclaimed "a model of a steadfast and courageous commander." The commandant deserved such praise for personally shooting several retreating soldiers, and also gave the order to hang "alarmists" and "defeatists", attaching a sign to the corpses with the inscription "This will be with every coward." On the same day, the commandant gave the order to shoot the former police chief of Bromberg, SS Standartenführer Karal von Zalış, who "allowed himself to show cowardice." In some cases, the sentences were more lenient. The commandant removed from his post the chief burgomaster of the city, who was sent from the "test unit" (an analogue of the penal battalion). However, these punitive measures could not save Army Group Vistula, which had taken up an unfortunate defensive position. The command of the army group led by Himmler could not make a single operational decision. Eismann attributed this to the "panic fear" that Himmler experienced before Hitler: "The horror experienced by the Reichsführer SS literally fettered all his actions. He could not even vigorously defend any military idea, there was no need even to talk about its implementation. Such attitudes led to invariable defeat and useless victims.

Eismann stated that Himmler was completely deprived of "any knowledge that would allow him to cope with a difficult, purely military task." In addition, he noted that the Reichsführer SS was unable to knock out replacements for the units, as well as organize the timely arrival

additional weapons. Meanwhile, during a visit to Berlin, which took place in March 1945, Goebbels was unpleasantly surprised by how optimistic Himmler was in assessing the general situation. However, Eismann had a slightly different opinion: "As the position of Army Group Vistula became hopeless, Himmler began to realize that he was not destined to win glory. Now he realized that he was completely not intended for military command. In addition, he saw that the competitors behind him were already fighting fierce battles at the Führer's headquarters. In March, Himmler fell ill with a severe sore throat. He almost did not get out of bed, even taking reports in a lying position. On March 21, 1945, Hitler decided to release Himmler from the post of commander of the Wisla Army Group, after which the Reichsführer SS went to the Hohenlilien sanatorium, where his old friend Karl Gebhardt was supposed to cure him.

However, Himmler retained the post of commander of the reserve army, which meant that he could control the Volkssturm. In addition, as the Reichsführer SS and chief of the German police, he still had the opportunity to connect to the defense of the Reich. However, all this activity was reduced to the issuance of militant orders. For example, March 28, 1945 Himmler

ordered to shoot all the men in the houses on which the white flag was hung. On April 15, 1945, he declared: "None of the German villages should be defenseless. Every city, every village must be defended by all available means. Every German man who has violated this natural duty to the nation has covered himself with dishonor and has no right to life. In the final months of the war, the Gestapo executed thousands of Germans. In February 1945, the local structures of the Gestapo received the right to "special treatment" with those detained and arrested. And the Gestapo

take full advantage of this right. In addition, at the end of March 1945, Himmler issued an order that allowed each owner of a weapon to shoot looters and robbers on the spot. Therefore, after each air raid, many German cities were covered by a wave of uniform terror. First of all, he touched on foreign workers who were forcibly driven to Germany.

Chapter 23

After the Western allies landed in Normandy, thereby opening the Second Front, numerous attempts were made in the Third Reich, if not to destroy the coalition, then at least to complicate relations between Moscow and the West. To this end, various rumors were spread that one of the parties was conducting separate peace negotiations with the Third Reich. In fact, these rumors were used not only for "diplomatic diversions", HO, but also to pave the way for real secret negotiations. These ideas were very popular in Hitler's inner circle. For example, when in September 1944 the Japanese ambassador Hiroshi Oshima approached Hitler with a proposal to start peace negotiations with the Soviet Union, Goebbels wrote a special memorandum in which he proposed concrete steps to be taken in order to get closer to the Stalins. At the same time, Joachim von Ribbentrop received from the Fuhrer the task of "working in all directions", establishing contacts with the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition. However, this activity was focused primarily on the spread of misinformation. Ribbentrop himself tried to use Spanish diplomats to spread the word about possible negotiations with Moscow. This was to become a kind of bait for the Western powers. In this regard, it seems interesting to note that

Himmler made September 12, 1944 on his service calendar: "England or Russia? Russia-Japan.

A few years ago, Western researchers discovered a short note by Winston Churchill referring to the "Himmler telegram." Since the British Prime Minister ordered that the telegram be destroyed, nothing is known about its exact content. It is not even possible to ascertain whether this was really a "Himmler telegram" or some other document whose authorship in the UK was simply attributed to Himmler. It is known that Himmler at the end of the war made several half-hearted attempts to start peace negotiations. As commander of the reserve army, the Volkssturm, and then commander of the Upper Rhine and Vistula groups, he could not help but see that the war was lost. However, he began to take concrete steps to implement his "peace plan" only when the Reich was on the verge of a military catastrophe. Under these conditions, it was unlikely that the Allies, already victorious, would have agreed to Himmler's proposals.

Himmler was not the only one who tried in 1945 to start peace negotiations. From the diaries of Goebbels it follows that from January 1945 he constantly discussed with Hitler the possibility of starting peace negotiations. However, Hitler refused this step as long as the coalition opposing Germany existed. For this reason, the theoretical possibility of starting peace negotiations, which Goebbels and Hitler discussed in 1945, mainly referred to the Western powers. It was not until March that Hitler agreed with the Propaganda Minister that there was a possibility of starting separate negotiations with the Soviet Union. Some time after

Before this conversation took place, Goebbels met with Himmler, who was undergoing treatment at the Hohenlirchen sanatorium. They spoke in private

less than two hours. Goebbels later wrote in his diary that the Reichsführer SS, who suffered from a terrible sore throat, made a depressing impression on him. However, in terms of political ideas, they agreed. "Himmler attacked Goering and Ribbentrop in the harshest terms, whom he considered the source of all the mistakes made during the war. In this he is absolutely right." The Reichsführer SS was very concerned not only with the situation on the fronts, but also with the food supply of the population. In addition, he noted that there was no strong leadership either in the army or in the civil administration. And again he blamed Goering and Ribbentrop for all the troubles in Germany. "What to do with them? In the end, it is not by force to force the Führer to part with these people. This little phrase suggests that, under certain circumstances, people from the Führer's "inner circle" could put pressure on him to change his political course. Goebbels himself believed that it was easier to negotiate with Stalin than with the "Anglo-American madmen." However, in a conversation with Hitler, he continued to insist that the solution had to be sought in the West. Besides, Goebbels did not consider it necessary to inform Himmler that Hitler had a diametrically opposed point of view.

After a few days, the Propaganda Minister discovered that the Führer was extremely dissatisfied with Himmler. "The Führer places most of the blame on Himmler." At the end of March, an incident occurred that finally destroyed the relationship between Himmler and Hitler. The fact is that Hitler believed that he could have won the war if he had retained control of the Hungarian oil fields. After the Soviet troops were able to occupy Budapest, a major operation was planned, during which the German and Hungarian troops were to crush the Red Army in the territory

Hungary. For this purpose, two SS tank corps were transferred there, including the Leibstandarte Panzer Division.

When the operation failed, Hitler, taking out his anger on division commander Sepp Dietrich, ordered all officers of the Leibstandarte to rip off their sleeve patches from their uniforms, which was similar to tearing off shoulder straps. Despite the fact that Himmler was not in a position to intervene in the situation, he could not understand why it was so necessary to humiliate one of the most combat-ready parts of the Reich?

In March 1945, Himmler was fully aware that he had failed as a military commander and had fallen out of favor with Hitler. Under these conditions, he begins to look for the possibility of making a political decision that could end the war. At first, he believed that he could use the Jews imprisoned in the concentration camps as hostages. He believed that since the Third Reich waged war against the Jews, then the end of the war should have been connected precisely with them.

In mid-March, Himmler met with his former massage therapist and personal physician, Felix Kersten. Kersten moved to Sweden during the war years, where he was able to offer his services to the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs as an intermediary. Himmler, through Kersten, asked to be told that if negotiations began, then when the Allied troops approached, he could refrain from blowing up the concentration camps and destroying the prisoners who were in them. In the following days, Himmler repeated this idea more than once. Moreover, he ordered the commandants of the camps to stop killing Jews and do everything possible to reduce the death rate of prisoners in the camps. This order was transmitted to Oswald Pohl, after which he distributed it to the camps. Returning back to Sweden, Kersten met in Stockholm with a representative

World Jewish Congress "by Hillel Storch, to whom he told about Himmler's readiness to transport 10 thousand Jewish prisoners to Sweden or Switzerland. If we go back a little, it should be noted that already in February 1945, Himmler constantly discussed the fate of concentration camp prisoners with the vice-president of the Swedish Red Cross, Count Folke Bernadotte. Bernadotte himself acted on behalf of the Swedish

government. Himmler first met them on February 18, 1945, and again in early March. At first, the fate of the Scandinavians, who were imprisoned in concentration camps, was discussed. Most of them were gathered in the Neuengamme camp. Then they talked about other groups of prisoners who were planned to be first transported to the territory of Denmark, and from there to be transported to Sweden. Himmler's consent to the release of 10,000 Jews, conveyed by Kersten, could be seen as significant progress in the negotiations. In general, it was supposed to transport about 20 thousand people to neutral countries, including 8 thousand

Scandinavians.

During the first meeting, Count Bernadotte was quite amazed that he did not meet the monster: "There was nothing unusual or frightening about him. Sometimes he allowed himself jokes. He was also willing to tell jokes to lighten the mood." Himmler, who had always been an excellent diplomat and duplicitous politician, able to present himself in the image that was beneficial to him, once again decided to resort to his specific talents. He wanted to appear before the Swede in the guise of a reasonable person with whom it was possible and necessary to negotiate.

After meeting with Kersten, Himmler sent a letter to him in Sweden. It was probably the most amazing document that was compiled by Heinrich Himmler. In a letter to Himmler

informed Kersten of TOM that he officially released 2,700 Jews from concentration camps who were sent to Switzerland. One line from this letter seems surprising: "In fact, this was a continuation of the path that I and my employees consistently followed for many years, until the war and its madness led us astray." Himmler stated that in 1936-1939 he, together with Jewish organizations in the United States, tried to resolve the issue of the emigration of Jews from the Reich. Himmler added: "The dispatch of two echelons to Switzerland is a conscious step that was taken despite all the difficulties. But it is he who will help the resumption of a useful process. After that, Himmler tried to comment on the situation in the Bergen-Belsen camp. The Reichsführer SS stated that "there were rumors that a typhus epidemic broke out there, which got out of control."

The tone of this letter showed that Himmler still considered himself an equal partner in negotiations with the Western powers. However, this was self-deception. When Storch suggested involving a representative of British diplomacy in the negotiations on the extradition of the Jews, Foreign Minister Eden told Churchill that he would not want to have anything to do with this process. The only reason for this position was that Heinrich Himmler was behind these negotiations. After that, Churchill said: "No business with Himmler." Himmler could not suspect that he was number one on the list of war criminals among the Allies. He quite hypocritically complained to Bernadotte that abroad he, the Reichsführer SS, was perceived as unnecessarily cruel, but in fact cruelty was alien and even disgusting to him. Meanwhile, Walter Schellenberg was steadily urging Himmler to depose Hitler and put himself at the head of Germany. Further events are described in sufficient detail in the memoirs of Felix Kersten.

In mid-April 1945, Himmler set a day when he was ready to meet Storch again. However, Storch refused to fly to Germany. Instead of himself, he decided to send Norbet Mazur, who was the director of the New York branch of the World Jewish Congress. Mazur did not have an entry visa, but he received guarantees of personal safety from Himmler, and therefore, accompanied by Kersten, he went to Germany. Himmler insisted that the German embassy should not know anything about this mission. He was afraid that Ribbentrop would intervene and get into trouble with Hitler. Mazur and Kersten flew to Germany on 19 April 1945 on a special plane in which they were the only passengers. Kersten recalled: "When the plane landed at Tempelhof Airport, a group of police officers - about six people in neat uniforms - greeted us with the exclamation "Heil Hitler!". Mazur took off his hat and politely said: "Good evening." On the airfield, I received from the Reichsführer SS a pass for Mazur, signed by SS Brigadeführer Schellenberg.

The meeting with Schellenberg took place on the night of April 19-20. Kersten and Mazur had a long conversation about the wishes of the Swedish government and the need to free as many Jews as possible, which could be a proof of goodwill. "Schellenberg was discouraged, because the party leadership in the person of Bormann exerted such strong pressure on Himmler that he was not inclined to further concessions. The party leadership demanded that Himmler carry out the order of the Fuhrer: if the regime falls, then as many of its enemies as possible should be eliminated. The conversation lasted several hours. On the night of April 21, Heinrich Himmler arrived in Harzwald, where the preliminary meeting took place. Kersten, left alone with the Reichsfuehrer SS, asked to be extremely correct in relation to Mazur. "We must show the world, which abhors the methods adopted in the Third Reich,

reprisals against political enemies, that this approach was abandoned and that humane measures were adopted. It is extremely important to prove this so that history does not make a one-sided judgment about the German people. Himmler promised to do everything possible to satisfy Mazur's requests. He said: "I want to bury the hatchet between us and the Jews. If something depended on me, a lot would have been done differently."

After that, negotiations began with Mazur. Himmler started the conversation by saying that his generation had never known peace. He then immediately turned to the Jews and said that they played a key role in the German civil war, especially during the uprising of the Spartak group. The Jews were a foreign element in Germany; in earlier eras, attempts to drive them out of the country failed. He stated: "Having taken power, we sought to solve the Jewish question once and for all. To this end, I created an emigration service that would create the most favorable conditions for the Jews. But none of the countries that expressed such friendliness towards the Jews agreed to accept them." After some objections from Mazur, Himmler moved on to the "Russian problem": "The Russians are not ordinary enemies. We Europeans are unable to understand their mentality. We must either win or die. The war in the east has become the most severe test for our soldiers. If the Jewish people suffer from a cruel war, we should not forget that it did not spare the German people either.

Further, Himmler tried to present the concentration camps as "educational institutions": "Along with Jews and political prisoners, criminal elements are kept there. Thanks to their arrest, by 1941 Germany had the lowest crime rate in many years. Prisoners have to work hard, but they do not

do not differ from all Germans. And they have always been treated fairly."

Mazur stated that it was impossible to deny the crimes that were committed in the camps. In response, Himmler said: "I admit that they happened from time to time, but I punished those who

is responsible for them."

Realizing that the conversation had gone down a "dangerous course", Felix Kersten intervened, who suggested discussing the problem of prisoners who could still be saved. Mazur offered to release all the Jews who were in the concentration camps. Himmler chose to ignore this proposal, but began to talk about the ingratitude of the Western powers: "When I released 2,700 Jews to Switzerland, this became an occasion to unleash a campaign in the press against me personally. It was alleged that I only released these people in order to provide myself with an alibi. But I don't need no alibi! I have always done only what I thought was fair, what was necessary for my people. And I will answer for it. Over the past ten years, no one has been poured as much dirt on anyone as on me. But I never worried about it. Even in Germany, anyone can say whatever they want about me. Foreign newspapers have also launched a campaign against me, after which I have no desire to continue surrendering the camps.

Then the talk turned to the release of the prisoners of the Ravensbrück camp and Himmler's promise to transport them to Sweden. Mazur insisted on a detailed agreement. Himmler hesitated. When Kersten realized that the negotiations were reaching an impasse, he asked Himmler to look over the lists,

received from the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which listed persons whose release was given particular importance.

After that, Himmler and Kersten could talk face to face. Kersten insisted that the Reichsfuehrer SS adhere to the agreements that had been reached during the March conversation. Himmler then agreed to release a thousand Jewish women from Ravensbrück. But he insisted that they be listed as "Polish" in the documents, which would allow him to bypass Hitler's orders.

After that, in a conversation with Mazur, Himmler moved on to general political issues. He mentioned the German occupation of France and stated that the occupied country was well governed, unemployment was almost over and there was enough food for everyone. In the following words, Himmler emphatically emphasized the importance of Germany's struggle against Bolshevism: "Hitler created the National Socialist state as the only possible form of political organization capable of challenging Bolshevism. If the Reich falls, American and British soldiers will be infected with Bolshevism and their countries will be engulfed in social unrest. The German masses, forced to turn to the left, will greet the Russians as brothers, after which indescribable chaos will reign in the world.

In general, the negotiations between Himmler and Mazur lasted several hours. They ended around 5 am, after which Mazur and Kersten left the country. Himmler, meanwhile, met with Count Bernadotte twice more. The first time this happened in the early morning of April 21 (that is, immediately after the end of negotiations with Mazur) in the Hohenlischen sanatorium. But since the Soviet troops were rapidly moving forward, Himmler was forced to leave the sanatorium and urgently move to Lübeck with his entourage. It was there that the second meeting with Count Bernadotte took place. It took place

on the night of April 23-24 in the building of the Swedish Consulate. It was then that Himmler told the Swede that in a few days Hitler would be dead, and therefore he could speak as the Fuhrer's successor. Himmler asked Bernadotte to organize a meeting with Eisenhower through the Swedish government so that the Western Front could capitulate on certain conditions. At the same time, Himmler declared that on the Eastern Front the German troops would fight for as long as possible. Not relying solely on the Swedes, Himmler tried to contact Charles de Gaulle. Later, he wrote in his memoirs that through unofficial channels he received from the Reichsführer SS a proposal to unite the defeated Germany and France, which would not allow the British and Americans to turn France into a satellite country. De Gaulle agreed that there was a lot of truth in this proposal, but refused to accept it, since it came precisely from Himmler.

Returning to Sweden, Bernadotte confidentially informed the Swedish Foreign Minister Christian Günther and the American ambassador in Stockholm about his meetings with Himmler. As expected, the Western powers not only refused to negotiate with Himmler, but also published information about his proposal in the press. Then this news got into the messages of international agencies and began to be broadcast on the radio. It was from radio interceptions in Germany that they learned about Himmler's secret negotiations. The news reached Hitler's bunker on 29 April. The Fuhrer had a fit of rage. The day before his suicide, Hitler made a "political testament", according to which Himmler was deprived of all posts. "Before my death, I exclude the former Reichsfuehrer SS Heinrich Himmler from the party and remove from all government posts ... Goering and Himmler conducted secret negotiations with the enemy without my consent and against my will, and

also tried to take power in the state into their own hands, which caused irreparable damage to the country and all the people, not to mention the betrayal of my personality. Himmler's successor as Reichsführer-SS was Gauleiter Breslau Karl Hanke.

At the end of the war, Himmler almost never met his family, who lived in Gmünd, nor Hedwig Potthast and the two children, who were in Berchtesgaden. Communication with them

could only be supported by telephone. It is significant that even at this time both Margareta and Hedwig were devoted to Heinrich Himmler. They had no doubts and did not intend to see Himmler as a war criminal. On January 16, 1945, Heinrich's brother, Gebhard Himmler, arrived to visit Margareta. After 1933, he made a good career in the vocational education system. And at the suggestion of his brother, he even received an SS officer rank. The diaries kept by Margareta Himmler make it possible to establish that at the end of the war, Gebhard placed the blame for the coming decline of the Third Reich on his brother in many respects. If he wanted to find some understanding with the wife of the Reichsfuehrer SS, then he was deeply mistaken. "He wanted to talk to me. I have a bad feeling. What he said was a consequence of the Catholic views that were inherent in him [Gebhard. - AB] and his parents. Heini warned me about this. I don't understand this." Two weeks later, Margareta wrote in her diary: "It's great that Heinrich has been given major tasks and he succeeds. Now all of Germany is looking at him." On February 21, she noted that she intended to remain in Gmünd, "as Heinrich wanted it."

Despite numerous disagreements, Himmler tried to keep in touch with his wife until April 1945. Together with her daughter Gudrun, left Gmünde when they reached the city

American troops approached. They headed south. In May 1945 they ended up in Italy, where they ended up in a British internment camp. An officer of the British secret police repeatedly interrogated both Margareta and Gudrun Himmler. However, the interrogations soon stopped, as it became clear that the Reichsfuehrer SS did not at all dedicate his wife to professional secrets. In his characterization, he noted that Margareta Himmler, in her mentality, "resembled a layman from a small town." Hedwig Potthast saw Heinrich Himmler for the last time in mid-March 1945 at the Hohenlischen sanatorium. From there she went to Berchtesgaden. At this point, their communication was limited to daily phone calls. The last telephone conversation between Hedwig and Himmler took place on 19 April.

However, in April 1945, Himmler was not up to his personal life. He was preparing to lead the Third Reich. While in Lübeck, Himmler continued to count on power in the state, the territory of which was rapidly decreasing every hour. When the details of his negotiations with Count Bernadotte became known, Himmler resolutely denied all accusations of betrayal. He did not yet know that he had been removed from all posts by Hitler. However, on April 30, 1945, Dönitz unexpectedly visited him. He received a telegram from the Fuhrer's bunker, which reported Himmler's treason, and also contained a demand to punish all traitors "with lightning speed and cruelty." Dönitz accused Himmler of negotiating with the Western allies behind Hitler's back. However, there was no way to punish Himmler. In Lübeck, where Himmler stayed until April 30, several police units were stationed and there were many SS men. Dönitz did not have any means to maintain power, and therefore simply brought the information received to the attention of Himmler, after which

again departed for Captivity. A few hours later he learned that he had become Hitler's successor and head of Germany. Now the time has come for Himmler to arrive in Plön to Dönitz. He appeared at night accompanied by six armed SS officers. Himmler was clearly shocked that it was Dönitz who became Hitler's successor. He offered his services to the grand admiral "as the second person in the state." Dönitz refused, after which he transferred his "government headquarters" to the north, to the city of Flensburg. Himmler followed him with his entourage. He still tried to negotiate, but they were all unsuccessful. The problem was that the information received did not indicate that Himmler had been removed from all posts. This explains the text of the letter, which was handed to Himmler on May 4 (according to other sources, May 5). It read: "Dear Mr. Imperial Minister! In view of the current situation, I have decided to relieve you of your positions as minister of the interior, member of the government, commander of the reserve army and chief of police. All your posts have been abolished. Thank you for your service to the Reich." Dönitz formed the last government of the Reich, which was supposed to be fundamentally non-political.

Therefore, Dönitz did not need SS officers and the former Reichsführer SS, who could only discredit the government in Flensburg. Moreover, Dönitz removed Goebbels from all posts, not knowing that he committed suicide a few days ago.

Despite the fact that the situation was almost hopeless, Himmler looked cheerful and even optimistic, as Count Schwerin von Krosigk (foreign minister in the new government) and Dönitz's adjutant Walter Lude Neurath stated literally in chorus in their memoirs. Himmler stated more than once that the OH and his SS would still play an important role in the post-war organization of Europe. On May 5, 1945, Himmler spoke for the last time.

in front of their officers. He stated that he did not intend to surrender or commit suicide. He intended to keep fighting.

Chapter 24

The events of the two weeks that have passed since the moment Heinrich Himmler left Flensburg with his close associates have given rise to various speculations for decades. It was one of the strangest and most mysterious episodes in the history of World War II. However, there is a sufficient amount of material that allows us to reconstruct the events of those days. What happened during this time?

Realizing that, most likely, he would not wait for a response from Montgomery, Himmler decided to take several active steps. He assumed that he could count on Kaltenbrunner and Berger in the south of the country, Schellenberg and Best in the north, and Otto Ohlendorf in the west. Ohlendorf, the SS Gruppenführer who headed the 3rd Directorate of the RSHA, during subsequent interrogations, described Himmler's management style as follows: "He did not assume the existence of an orderly relationship. He was an imitator. He tried to copy Hitler's mannerisms, but only on a more modest scale. Hitler himself carried out a policy that was detrimental to us when he entrusted the task not to an organization, but to a specific individual, and if possible, to several individuals. Himmler took this demeanor cases."

Despite the fact that the relationship that developed between Ohlendorf and Himmler was never particularly warm, the SS Gruppenführer decided to help his former boss. On the eve of the surrender of Germany, he provided

Himmler ordered his apartments in Plön u Flensburg. At this time, he had a real opportunity to constantly talk with Himmler. Even after Himmler left Flensburg, he tried to maintain constant contact with Ohlendorf. During interrogations in 1945-1946, Ohlendorf was repeatedly asked about the content of the letter that Himmler wrote to British Field Marshal Montgomery. He testified as follows: "On May 10 and 11, Himmler wrote a letter to Montgomery. The letter was to be delivered by Colonel-General Jodl.

Himmler asked Montgomery for a personal meeting. He wanted to discuss the issue of the concentration camps. Himmler believed he could justify his actions." It is possible that Himmler did not receive a reply, since Jodl did not dare to deliver this letter to the British field marshal. During the trial, Ohlendorf confirmed to Judge Anthony Mammann his past statements.

Question: "Did you maintain daily contact with Himmler after May 8?"

Answer: Yes. Question: "How long did it last?"

Answer: "At least until May 19th. I think maybe even before May 21st. He changed his appearance, put on different clothes, in which he ended up in a prisoner of war camp.

When Himmler realized that the Western Allies did not intend to negotiate with him, he decided to move south. According to the official version, which is readily supported in English and

American research literature, Himmler intended to get to the Alps, where he was to lead the guerrilla war of the "werewolves". Really,

As early as April 18, 1945, Ernst Kaltenbrunner received the order to begin preparations for guerrilla warfare. However, the "Alpine Stronghold", as the project to create a center of National Socialist resistance in Austria and Southern Bavaria was often called, never arose. In this regard, the question cannot but arise: how could Himmler lead a guerrilla war, if a few days earlier, as a concession to the Western allies, he ordered through Rudolf Brandt that all detachments of "werewolves" cease resistance? A similar order was issued by Doenitz and Keitel, who represented the new German government.

For some time, Heinrich Himmer was in the Saturp estate, which was located south of Flensburg. At this time, both Soviet and Western intelligence agencies were actively searching for Himmler. There were many rumors and fabrications in the press of those days. Some said that Himmler was arrested by Dönitz and was in Flensburg, others put forward truly fantastic versions. For example, allegedly Himmler went to Japan in a submarine. However, in all these reports, one thing was common - the allies knew that Himmler had been in Flensburg for some time, and therefore they knew in which area it was necessary to look for him.

Later it turned out that Himmler, accompanied by fourteen people, was on his way. Werner Grotmann, who accompanied him, suggested that his boss planned to independently contact Montgomery in order to agree on a possible start of hostilities against the Soviet Union. Himmler and his entourage arrived on the eastern bank of the Elbe estuary, where they began to look for an opportunity to cross the river. SS Obergruppenführer Hans Prützmann had to find a man who, for a fee, would agree to

send the group to the other side. Since there was no news that Montgomery was ready to start negotiations, Himmler's group was forced to continue their journey south. "Escort" it was decided to reduce. It now consisted of Karl Gebhardt, Rudolf Brandt, Josef Kirmeyer, Werner Grotmann and Heinz Maher, who led a group of so-called bodyguards. Before moving to the other side of the Elbe, it was decided to leave all weapons. The man who transported Himmler and his "paladins" on the ferry testified that he could not recognize any of his passengers.

After that, Himmler decided to stay in the town of Neuhaus (Lower Saxony). It still remains a mystery where OH and the people who accompanied him spent the next day.

Some of the Western historians suggest that Himmler decided to stay with Hedwig Potthast, but this version seems simply unbelievable. The fact is that on May 22, 1945, she was interrogated in Bavaria, and therefore, hardly a few days earlier, she could have been in northern Germany. Between May 12 and 18, Himmler's group traveled 160 kilometers on foot, eventually reaching the outskirts of the small town of Bremeförde. After that, everyone decided to cross the bridge, which was controlled by British troops. It was a huge risk. However, before that, it was necessary to take a break and stop for a rest. For this, the house of a peasant named Dunkers was chosen. Since the men were very dirty and unshaven, Frau Dankers and her son brought water and a shaver. Later they were interrogated more than once about this. In response, they could say that two men were clearly engaged in the protection of one of the travelers. In this case, it was about Himmler, who was guarded by Grotman and Maher.

Taking advantage of the respite, OHM began to discuss a plan of action. It was decided that Kirmeyer would scout the situation around the bridge, after which he would go to the local landrat, where he would try to get passes. Kirmeyer went to the local authorities twice, but both times they were denied passes that would allow them to cross the bridge. Now, at the suggestion of Karl Gebhardt, a new plan was developed.

He, who spoke fluent English, was to be accompanied by Kirmeyer to the bridge, which was supposed to be crossed according to demobilization documents. They were supposed to represent soldiers who were heading home to Bavaria.

This plan was decided to be carried out on May 20 at about 3 p.m. They headed for the British checkpoint on the bridge. If the plan had worked, they would have gone back. In this case, it would be possible to cross the bridge one by one. However, the pair of "demobilized soldiers" seemed very suspicious to the British. Therefore, it was decided to send them to the local counterintelligence, which was located in the building of the mill. There, Sergeant Ken Basebrown took up the interrogation of the Germans. He had at his disposal detailed lists of all wanted NSDAP functionaries, employees of the SS, SD and Gestapo. At first, nothing aroused suspicion. However, Gebhardt and Kirmeyer had documents of demobilized field police officers in their hands, and therefore they were automatically subject to arrest. When Gebhardt mentioned that he had to take care of several wounded soldiers, the British immediately assembled two trucks that were supposed to head to the Dunkers' house. They were accompanied by a heavily armed group of British soldiers. The "guide" was to be Karl Gebhardt. He tried not to show that the situation was out of control.

However, when the trucks pulled up to the house, there were only ten people there. Himmler, Grotmann and Maher instinctively sensed the danger and were able to escape minutes before the British arrived. It seemed to them that Gebhardt and Kirmeier were absent suspiciously

for a long time.

Later, during interrogations, Grotmann revealed that Himmler intended to take refuge in the Harz, trying to avoid being captured as long as possible. The British officer who conducted the interrogation made a very important conclusion: "Grotmann stated unequivocally that Himmler did not have any specific shelter in mind, nor did he intend to form a center of armed resistance in the Alpine region." Meanwhile, Karl Gebhardt and Kirmeier and other captured Germans were being interrogated at the mill. Pointing out a lot of inaccuracies in the information received, the British managed to force them to admit that they were all part of Himmler's escort group. That is, on May 20 or 21, 1945, the British secret services should have received information that Himmler was hiding somewhere in the vicinity of Bremerferde. At this time, Himmler, Grotmann and Maher behaved in the most strange way. They appeared on the central streets of Bremerförl. Grotmann and Maher were dressed in rubberized military coats, and Himmler in a blue civilian raincoat. Since they did not hide at all, anyone could see that Maher was wounded in the leg, and therefore limped very badly. Then all three constantly looked around. By the evening of May 22, they approached the eastern outskirts of the city, where they were arrested by two Red Army soldiers, former Soviet prisoners of war V.I. Gubarev and I.E. Sidorov. After that, they handed over the detainees to a British military police patrol. They were taken to Officer Arthur Brighton, who immediately contacted John Hogg, who represented the British intelligence services. After that, all three were placed at the disposal of Ken Basebrown. When he

arrived at the scene, two were standing, and the third (Heinrich Himmler) was sitting on the ground. One of those who was standing pointed to the one who was sitting and said that he suffered from severe stomach pains. After that, Basebrown gave the man a glass of tea.

Since, according to the documents in hand, all three were listed as field police officers, they were subject to arrest. The search was entrusted to Corporal Richard Forrest, he examined the items found, including very expensive glasses. He was not at all alarmed that an ordinary sergeant major could possess such an object. However, it seems very strange that a simple sergeant major and two of his entourage spent almost a day at the mill under heavy guard, and were not immediately sent to an internment camp. At that time, Himmler had only documents that were issued in the name of the sergeant major of the field police, Heinrich Hitzinger. In the morning, the detainees were sent by truck to the Westertimke camp located 30 kilometers from Bremerförde. However, this was not a camp for prisoners of war, but only for internees.

Arrested on the way to Westertimke was accompanied by Arthur Brighton and two escort soldiers. Upon arrival in Vestertimke, several more detained Germans were put into the truck, after which the car headed for Barnstedt-Kolkhagen.

The last 16 hours of Heinrich Himmler's life are very difficult to reconstruct, as eyewitness accounts are full of contradictions and mutually exclusive information. It is assumed that Himmler and his officers arrived in Barnstedt, where Camp 031 was located, at about 1830 hours. Although British officers Sylvester and Murphy, who were interviewed by historians Manvell and Frenkel in 1963, testified that Himmler was brought to the camp at about 2 pm. If

calculate the time the truck took, TO it turns out that it should have arrived in Barnstedt between 12 and 14 hours. This information is confirmed by Chaim Herzog, the future president of Israel, who was an eyewitness to these events. Moreover, even from this evidence, it remains unclear what Himmler did during the several hours that elapsed from the moment he arrived at the camp to the moment he met Selvester. It is believed that "Heinrich Hitzinger" asked to meet with the camp authorities at about 4 p.m., at about 5 p.m. he was identified as Heinrich Himmler, at 9 p.m. he left camp 031 in Barnstedt, and at 2245 arrived in Lüneburg, where he soon committed suicide. Considering that the distance between Lüneburg and Barnstedt was only 15 kilometers, it seems very suspicious that it was covered by car in

1 hour 45 minutes. In addition, there are many other strange and even suspicious contradictions.

Barnstedt was home to the former Gauleiter of Hamburg, Karl Kaufmann, who, despite Dönitz's orders, surrendered the city to the British without a fight. He witnessed the truck arrive. At the same time, he noticed several people, including a man with an eye patch, whom he identified as Heinrich Himmler. Kaufmann was familiar with the Reichsfuehrer SS. Strange in this testimony is the mention that Himmler immediately took off his bandage and put on his glasses. This suggests that he planned to open up. However, Captain Smith, Captain Sylvester and Chaim Herzog unanimously stated that at the moment when Himmler Hitzinger appeared before them, he was still in a black armband. Various descriptions of events diverge. According to one version, the meeting of the camp commandant Thomas Selvester with Himmler took place at 19:00. However, Herzog points out that Sylvester received him a few hours earlier, after finishing his lunch. When to Sylvester's office

"Sergeant Major Hitzinger" came in, OH immediately declared that he was in fact "SS Reichsfuehrer Heinrich Himmler". When Captain Smith asked who the other two people were, Gimmer stated that they were his adjutant and bodyguard. Himmler then removed the bandage from his eye. He was asked to sign an autograph so that it could be compared with a facsimile of the signatures of the wanted leaders of the Third Reich. When it turned out that the signatures were almost identical, the British officers were convinced that in front of them was not one of the sergeants who went crazy during the war, but really the former head of the SS, Heinrich Himmler. The news quickly spread throughout the camp that Heinrich Himmler had been caught. This even led to some commotion, as all the British soldiers wanted to look at him and crowded in front of the building where the camp commandant was.

According to the official protocol, which was drawn up by Captain Smith, the situation was as follows. The request for a meeting with the camp commandant was expressed not by "sergeant major Hitzinger" himself, but by "non-commissioned officer Eduard Grotman." Only after that Himmler gave his real name. In response to the question of who the persons accompanying him were, he replied that they were Obersturmbannführer Werner Grotmann and Sturmbannführer Heinz Maher. After that, Smith reported them by phone to higher authorities. Until now, it remains unclear whether Field Marshal Montgomery was informed about Himmler's arrest, at a meeting with whom the former head of the SS continued to insist. It is not even known exactly where Montgomery was at that time. Despite the fact that after the war the employees of the British W

claimed that there were no records of Himmler's interrogations, there are many indirect indications that this information was not true.

If you look at the events of those hours, TO they looked something like this. Captain Sylvester, Captain Smith and Lieutenant Findl conducted a thorough search of Himmler. He was even ordered to change his underwear. During the search, a small glass ampoule with a colorless liquid was found, which was stored in a brass case. Himmler stated that it was a medicine that helped him with stomach pains. This ampoule was given to Major Randol. The same one handed it over to Colonel Michael Murphy, who served at the headquarters of the 2nd British Army. The further fate of the ampoule remains unknown, as well as it is not known whether a chemical analysis of its contents was carried out. Where it was found remains a mystery.

After the war, Captain Smith claimed that the ampoule in the case was found in the jacket. In this case, the question arises: why was it not found during a thorough search of the mill? In the camp, Himmler's bandage was taken away, instead of which he put on glasses. The prisoners were left under heavy guard, after which they began to wait for the arrival of Colonel Murphy and Major Rice from the army headquarters. Chaim Herzog testified that when Murphy found out about Himmler's arrest, he ordered by phone not to interrogate him and not to "touch him even with a finger." As for the last point, it should be noted that Himmler had already been searched twice by this time. An hour and a half later, Colonel Murphy's confidants, Major Rice and Major Randall, appeared at Camp Barnstaple.

In the meantime, Heinrich Himmler repeatedly expressed his desire to meet Field Marshal Montgomery or even Winston Churchill in person. During the conversation, Himmler was asked to change into a British uniform. He refused to do this, because he believed that he should not have put on the uniform of another state. Himmler said that the Germans might not understand his behavior if he put on the uniform of a recent enemy. Not

it is possible that OH feared that the British might pass him off as a saboteur. In addition, Himmler was very reluctant to put his signature on a blank sheet of paper, since it could be used for any purpose.

It makes sense to dwell in more detail on the plot with the found capsule. Captain Sylvester, in his report, wrote that the ampoule was found in a brass box, which was very similar in size to a cartridge box. He also discovered a similar container in which there were no ampoules. When asked by Captain Selvester, Himmler explained that it was a medicine that helped with stomach pains. Such a version cannot be ruled out, since until recently Himmler met with Karl Gebhard, and Grotmann drew the attention of British soldiers to the fact that his "comrade" suffered from stomach pains. In addition, it seems unlikely that Himmler would hide the cyanide capsule in the large brass case that would have been found on the first search. However, the strangest thing is that the suspicious brass containers were not found during the search of the mill. No less strange is the fact that the mill did not check whether Himmler's eye patch was real or if it was a disguise.

Himmler then asked for tea and something to eat. Sylvester intentionally gave the thick sandwiches, as he wanted to see if Himmler took the capsule out of his mouth. If that was the case, then it was a very irresponsible move. If Himmler hid the capsule with poison in his mouth, then he could unwittingly bite through it while eating. However, Himmler did not show the slightest sign of unrest. Himmler was at the disposal of Captain Selvester for several hours. At this time, he repeatedly tried to inquire about the health and well-being of Grotman and Maher. Such care completely excludes the version that

Himmler revealed his real name under pressure from Grotmann and Maher (as some researchers insist). Despite the strict ban on talking to Himmler, Captain Selvester nevertheless decided to start a conversation. He decided to ask how true the frightening stories about the concentration camps were. He handed him a stack of magazines containing photographs of the liberated camps, which showed heaps of corpses.

In response, Himmler declared: "I cannot be responsible for the excesses that my subordinates did without my knowledge."

It is necessary to note one fundamental point. If Himmler had been treated very kindly at first, that all changed when Colonel Michael Murphy arrived. What actually happened after his arrival remains unclear, since information about these hours is fragmentary and highly contradictory. It remains even unclear when he arrived at the Barnstedt camp, at 20:00 or 21:45. In any case, it follows from Captain Selvester's notes that at 1930 hours Himmler was interrogated by Major Rice, who served at the headquarters of the British 2nd Army.

When Colonel Murphy arrived at the camp, escorted by two large black cars, the atmosphere began to change. Murphy ordered Himmler to be searched again ("is there any poison on him"), but forbade the return of his clothes. That is, in the evening Himmler was searched for the third time. At the same time, Murphy constantly insulted Himmler, not stinting on expressions. In this, the Colonel was assisted by "a stocky sergeant from the suburbs of London" (as eyewitnesses described him), whose name was Edwin Austin. He accompanied Colonel Murphy, who drove Heinrich Himmler to the headquarters of the British 2nd Army around 10 pm. What happened after that is not exactly known. According to the official version, when Himmler's headquarters once again

began to search, decided to look into his mouth. After that, Himmler bit through the vial of poison that was there, as a result of which he died. It is impossible not to pay attention to the fact that Himmler some time ago ate thick sandwiches without fear of crushing the capsule, during repeated searches in clothes and on Himmler's body, no capsules were found either. That is, the story that was presented to the public looks at least doubtful. It is also impossible not to pay attention to the fact that some time ago, under similar circumstances, in the presence of Sergeant Edwin Austin, SS Obergruppenführer Hans-Adolf Prützmann committed suicide. Togo was also repeatedly searched, but Prutsman somehow managed to bite through the poison capsule, which for some reason no one could find during the searches.

Such strange coincidences, existing contradictions and inconsistencies allowed some German researchers to suggest that Heinrich Himmler did not commit suicide, but was killed. Two versions of Himmler's assassination were put forward. On the one hand, it has been suggested that Sergeant Edwin Austin was a "liquidator" who was engaged in the covert elimination of high-ranking SS employees, that is, it was a premeditated murder. In the second case, it was about unintentional murder. Austin, fearing that Himmler, like Prutsman, would bite through the poison vial that he could hide in his mouth, suggested that Colonel Murphy stun the arrested man with a rubber baton, which Austin never parted with, after which it was possible to check the oral cavity without any problems. Austin could not calculate the force of the blow, from which Heinrich Himmler could die.

If we consider the last days of the life of Heinrich Himmler, then it is not so much the circumstances of his strange death that seem interesting, but somewhat different details. none of

historians and HE was able to give a convincing answer: where Heinrich Himmler was moving, heading south. The version of Soviet historiography, which said that Himmler wanted to get through the territory of Denmark to neutral Sweden, is completely untenable, since Himmler moved in the opposite direction for almost two weeks. No less untenable is the Anglo-American version that Himmler was heading to the Alps to lead a partisan movement there. The myths about the "Alpine bastion" were, by and large, Soviet disinformation, focused on the Western allies (primarily the Americans), so that they would concentrate their main attack in the direction of Bavaria, and not on Berlin, which would allow the Soviet troops to take the imperial capital. However, Heinrich Himmler could not help but know that there was no "bastion" in the Alps that would continue to provide armed resistance. Again, if we rely on the testimony of Grotmann and Maher, then it followed that Himmler did not at all intend to wage any kind of armed struggle in

Alps. Again, we should not forget that it took Himmler and his group almost two weeks to cover a distance of approximately 150 kilometers, that is, it would take him a year and a half to reach the Alps.

When Heinrich Himmler moves south, it is striking that the proposed route led directly to the city of Quedlinburg, where the remains of King Henry I the Fowler were kept. It is known that Himmler considered himself a new incarnation of this ruler and allegedly could even enter into "spiritual contact" with him. Felix Kersten has repeatedly stated that Himmler supposedly made some decisions on the "advice" of the deceased monarch. It is possible that in this situation, Himmler, known for his penchant for mysticism, was heading to Quedlinburg to turn to Heinrich again [1]. This

explains why Himmler revealed his name - he did not want to waste time. However, there may be another explanation for the "last path" of Heinrich Himmler. In this case, it is necessary to pay closer attention to the figure of Heinz Maher. It is striking that Heinz Maher, despite being wounded in the leg, stubbornly continued to accompany Heinrich Himmler. This may seem strange, but it can be found its own logical explanation.

At the end of March 1945, Maher, who was a sapper, received an order from Himmler to blow up Wewelsburg Castle. For many years, the Reichsführer planned to turn this castle into a kind of "spiritual" center of the SS. Maher failed to destroy the castle, as his group did not take enough explosives with them, and therefore the building was simply set on fire. This is the first strange circumstance, since an experienced sapper could not help but know how many explosives would be required to destroy a solid structure. In addition, it cannot but be surprising that Himmler, who feared the capture of the castle by American troops, did not use the local group of sappers for this, but preferred to send the Maher group, which was located near Stettin. In order to reach the castle, Maher and his people had to travel almost a whole day. Considering that the American troops were very close and did not capture the castle only due to circumstances, such a decision seems reckless. One gets the impression that Himmler was by no means interested in blowing up the castle, but in something that he could entrust only to a special confidant. After the castle was on fire, and Maher's group left those places, local residents and liberated prisoners from a nearby concentration camp began to fight the fire. It was they who discovered Heinrich Himmler's secret safe, which was empty. In the meantime, Maher arrived at Bad Meinberg, from where

telephone told Himmler that his order had been carried out. Himmler himself demanded a personal meeting with Maher. Why was this required? It is unlikely that Himmler wanted to hear a colorful description of how his favorite brainchild was destroyed. The question arises, what did he want to hear? Most likely, what Maher could not convey to him via field communication in front of strangers. It was after this report that Maher was awarded the title of SS-Sturmbannführer. If we take into account that before this Maher's group had destroyed many bridges that were of great strategic importance, it seems strange that this SS man received a promotion for the destruction of the castle, which, by and large, was not destroyed.

The version builds itself. Maher was sent to Wewelsburg to take something from the castle, most likely from Himmler's personal safe, the existence of which was not even suspected by the SS officers who served in the castle. At the same time, Himmler had to provide Maher with some personal instructions, otherwise the commandant of the castle, Siegfried Taubert, could have coped with this task. Most likely, this SOMETHING could not be taken out of Wewelsburg unnoticed, and therefore this object (or objects) was hidden somewhere in its vicinity. After that, it becomes clear why Maher was not particularly zealous with undermining the castle, limiting himself to setting it on fire. A personal visit to Himmler on April 1, 1945 was required in order to tell where and how this SOMETHING was hidden. In this case, of course, such information could not be transmitted over communication. The presence of Maher and accompanied by Himmler in May 1945 suggests that the SS sapper acted as a guide to the hiding place, which he made on March 31, 1945. This explains why Himmler did not leave Maher but in

one of the village houses, despite the fact that he was hit on a note, which means that he not only attracted attention, but also could not quickly

move. Since, until the very moment of his death, which occurred in December 2001, Heinz Maher kept deathly silence about WHAT and WHERE he hid, this plot may become one of the biggest mysteries of the Third Reich.

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HIMMLER, THE MOST SINISTER FIGURE IN GERMANY, COMMITS SUICIDE.

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